

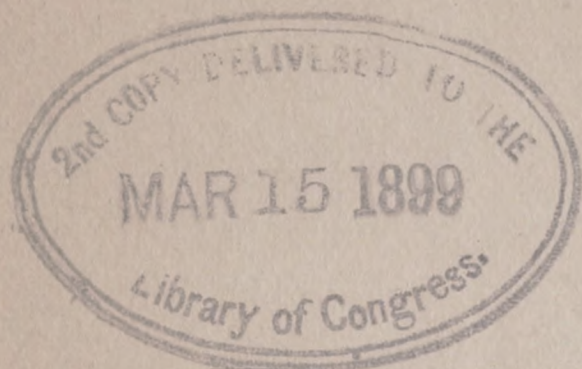
AN
INDEX
FINGER



TULIS
ABROJAL



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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

AN INDEX FINGER.

AN INDEX FINGER

BY
TULIS ABROJAL

pseud.

“All the Sutras are but fingers that point out the shining moon.”

“Man, thou livest forever.”

Has any one supposed it lucky to be born?

I hasten to inform him, or her, it is just as lucky to die; and I know it.

This day before dawn I ascended a hill and look'd at the crowded heaven.

And I said to my spirit: When we become the unfolders of those orbs, and the pleasure and knowledge of everything in them, shall we be filled and satisfied then?

And my spirit said: No, we but level that lift to pass and continue beyond.

—WALT WHITMAN.



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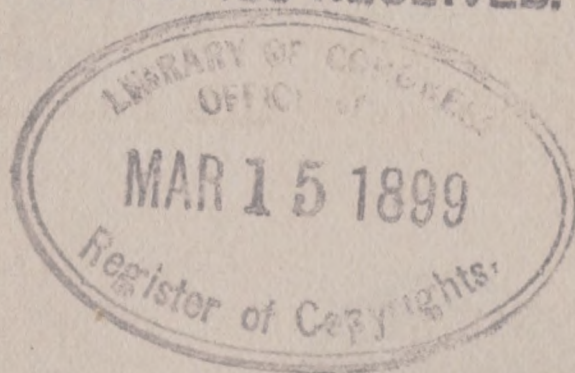
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DEDICATION.

To those who faithfully follow their ideals, ever doing the work they love to do, always giving to the world the best that is in them—the truth as they see it—though in the face of difficulties, disasters and defeat; enduring persecution, poverty and want, meeting the dread spectre of starvation, suffering death itself if need be, yet counting all not too great a price to pay for the freedom of their souls, this book is sympathetically dedicated.

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PREFACE.

THE good old custom of the author telling his readers in a preface why he wrote his book, happily has not yet gone out of date. Though no particular friend to guide-board literature in general, I confess to a weakness for the preface. It has its helpful uses. There the author can talk directly to his readers, without filtering his thoughts through the brains of his characters; and in consequence the readers come into closer sympathy with him and understand him better. In not a few cases I have wished books were all preface. I hope others may not wish so in this case.

In the preface we meet the author face to face, as it were, and he becomes ours or we become his at once. It is a little confidential glimpse into his soul, which he kindly gives us before we enter it by means of the book.

Yes, I am decidedly in favor of the preface, both as reader and author.

A time-honored method of prefatory writing, made the author assume a modesty that was self-depreciatory in the extreme. More often than not he warned readers off by throwing out hints disparaging his own ability. To such few read-

ers as he thought might follow him through the book in spite of his assurance that it would be unprofitable to do so, he apologized with the utmost humility for the waste of their time and drain upon their patience for which he was about to be responsible.

I shall do no such thing. On the contrary, I believe that he who reads this book will not find his time ill spent. Its theme is the most important that can engage the human race. It is my answer to the mightiest question ever propounded. *My* answer. Its value extends that far and no farther. "It is only insight into the ground of being that secures satisfaction and thorough knowledge." My light may be only a rush-light; but such as it is I obey the behest to let it shine.

Says one of the greatest of modern philosophers: "If anything in the world is worth wishing for—so well worth wishing for that even the ignorant and dull herd in its more reflective moments would prize it more than silver or gold—it is that a ray of light should fall on the obscurity of our being, and that we should gain some explanation of our mysterious existence, in which nothing is clear but its misery and its vanity."

To each of us things are what they appear from each particular point of view. Our idea is our limitation.

He who writes a book presents to other minds a picture of life as it appears to him, from whatever point of view he has chosen. His work portrays both that which he sees outside himself and that which is within. It is a combination of himself and the world as he sees it, for of subject and object are all things made.

When we read a tale it is the author we learn to know, rather than his people; but we know him through his people. They are the dwellers within his mind, and we cannot know them without entering that realm and knowing it, be it enchanted or disenchanting.

Sight and insight make up all literature. Every book is a combination of the author and what he looks upon and studies objectively as well as subjectively. It is truth as he sees it.

I have read many interesting works of fiction; but for the most part I laid them down dissatisfied. They lacked something for which I was always searching. They gave no answer to the questions that early began to trouble me—questions that nobody could answer and few cared to be bothered with. Often they were very attractive pictures of that which the world is to so many—a fool's paradise.

They dealt with the emotions of those whose lives they portrayed, and they appealed to the emotions of those who read them; and all had ever the one, one theme—the pursuit of happi-

ness. And all pursuers saw the alluring phantom in the same shape, and gave chase to it by the same road. Sometimes they captured it, and then—the book ended. There was nothing else for the author to do when he reached that point, but to let the curtain drop and turn out the lights, lest his audience see that the happiness so hotly pursued was not the true thing after all; but only an appearance, an illusion, a disappointment, as veritable a phantom as ever—which left the one in possession of it no better off than he was before he captured it.

Now the form of this phantom, was the love of the man and the woman for each other, and the possession of each by the other. Romances have been mostly amplified sex chases. They wrought upon the reader's emotions through many harrowing chapters, the end thereof being that a certain man married the particular woman he was pursuing.

An old man whom I knew in my youth said he only read the first and last chapters of a novel. In the one he became acquainted with the hero and heroine; in the other he found out "whether he got her or not." By so doing he escaped much emotional wear and tear to which less discriminating readers subjected themselves. As we all know, sometimes "he didn't get her." What then? Well, perhaps she died or he died, and that ended the story. Everybody accepted

that event as final and incontestable. That was the end, and nobody ventured to ask what lay behind it. It was the end of the successful as well as of the disappointed—the end of everybody in the world, yet nobody sought its meaning.

In this respect the people outside of books were precisely like the people in books. They had the same ideal of happiness, chased it through the same difficulties and disasters, and would not admit that it was a phantom; would not see that Death stalked behind every joy, sat at every feast, touched elbows right and left with the victorious as well as with the defeated, and waited for everybody under the sun. They knew it, of course, but they did not want to think about it or talk about it.

And what was this spectre to which all closed their eyes because of terror? Death was death. That was all they knew. It was the terrible and final thing that could happen. More; it was sure to happen; but it must be put off as long as possible and ignored in the meantime.

To me it ever was incomprehensible that so dreadful an issue was so hopelessly accepted and so little inquired into.

I pondered much on this strange problem. The dream haunted my mind that somewhere there was a solution.

I sought it everywhere from men and books; but long without success. At last a ray of light

fell upon my path. Faithfully following it through years of earnest inquiry I learned that Death is not death. With that knowledge happiness took a new form and beckoned to me over a new road.

Because of the new ideals it placed before me I wrote this book. Its people are my people; its gospel my gospel. From the truth as I was led to see it I found a reason for my own being as well as for that of the book, and I have tried to give it to the reader as simply as it came to me.

The psychical phenomena described are not exaggerated. Most of it came within my own experience, and would be accessible to any one who devoted to the study as much patience, time and effort as I did.

There will be those who will give to the book only the sneer of conceited ignorance. For such I have no message. With them, the first condition of all learning—*receptivity*—is lacking. I make no argument. I try to convince no one. I simply tell a story. It will bear its own message to those ready to receive it. None else can understand. God Himself cannot give us what we will not receive.

The book is but a finger that aims to point out to others a moon that made glorious light for me. And if you will patiently look in the direction it points, you, too, will see the shining moon.

THE AUTHOR.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHILD AND HER OWN PEOPLE.

There are some of us who in after years say to Fate, "Now deal us your hardest blow; give us what you will; but let us never again suffer as we suffered when we were children."

The barb in the arrow of childhood's suffering is this; its intense loneliness, its intense ignorance.—*Olive Schreiner*.

UNDER a great tree a child was singing softly to herself :

Beautiful, dear, and noble old tree
Bend your green branches caressing o'er me.
For oh! a day's coming, and soon will be here,
When I shall be far from your presence and cheer;
And my heart will be lonely without your embrace,
And you—you will long for a sight of my face.

Your branches bend low to the ground,
Bend low and caressingly,
And they sway with a murmurous sound—
A language of nature profound—
Sway soft and caressingly,
As they bend, with a sigh, to the ground.

They chant the grand chorus of ages,
In musical monotone;
And open the past's mystic pages—
The wonderful, solemn, sealed pages—
So vaguely and dimly known.
They sing me the song of the ages.

When I listen with spirit and soul
To each swaying, whisp'ring bough,
The silent centuries backward roll
And open before me like a scroll.
And I view the "Then as Now"—
When I listen with spirit and soul.

She was lying on the grass, with her face toward the sky, which she could only see in spots through the tree's thick branches, which hung low and swayed in the slightest breeze, with a motion that was very like a caress to one beneath them. A house stood near, but the tree completely hid it on one side. One coming from the south saw only a beautiful grassy hill surmounted by a great green umbrella.

Under this friendly shelter the woman-child lay, singing her own words to her own tunes. Oblivious to outward sounds, she heard no footsteps until the branches parted and a stranger entered her temple.

At this a dog that had been enjoying the profoundest of slumber near her, sprang to his feet with a great show of vigilance, making up for his tardiness by the most energetic barking.

"Be quiet, Bliss," said the child, rising to a sitting posture and looking steadily at the stranger, with the utmost composure. The dog at once became silent, but he went close to her and posed as on the defensive.

"I beg pardon," said the intruder, politely raising his hat, "I saw no one, and thought to

rest a bit in the shade, and get a cool drink of water, too."

"The well is on the other side of the house," she said, making a motion in that direction with a thin, nervous, unchildlike hand. Her words and manner expressed the utmost indifference—yet there was a gleam of interest in her big, clear eyes.

The stranger moved on, murmuring thanks. She looked after him with a sudden yearning in her heart for his return. He was not of her world, that was sure; and yet somehow it was quite clear to her that he was of her world—the world of her dreams, where she longed to be, fancied she had been, and from whence she had somehow sadly strayed. Yes, in that instant of contact she understood that in spite of all apparent difference their worlds were the same.

In another moment he returned. Gracefully begging permission, he seated himself on the grass and leaned against the tree. His manner captivated her. It was respectful and deferential as to a woman grown. It enchanted her, for she was one of those misunderstood children who have thoughts and feelings far beyond their years and suffer great humiliation when treated patronizingly.

"You are not at all afraid of me although I came unannounced and unintroduced, are you?" he asked, half laughing.

"Afraid? Why should I be? I am in my own door-yard. Besides, you don't look like a wild beast, and if you were one, here is Bliss to take care of me."

"Thank you. It's a comfort to know you have no doubt that I am human. But what is this?" he asked, as a piece of cardboard blew toward him. "Ah! a drawing. May I look at it?"

She nodded her consent.

It was a pencil drawing of a woman's head, and interested him at first glance, because, imperfect though it was, it had that which makes art great when it is so—the human quality, the power to express its creator, the aim and object of all art. This penciled face gave an insight into the artist's mind, showing that which she had tried to express and yet had not made clear. It showed the height to which she rose in fancy, and the long and rugged road between present performance and the perfection of which she dreamed.

All this the stranger saw, because we see what is within ourselves. It takes genius to recognize genius. He had traveled the road on which she was taking her first feeble steps.

"Is it your work?" he asked.

"Yes," she nodded, coloring faintly. It was plain that she expected no praise, yet longed for a helping word.

"Is it a copy?" he asked, for there was about

it, although but half expressed, that which he thought must have been suggested by something from a master hand.

"No."

"Then who is it?" There was unaffected interest in his voice.

"One of my people," she answered.

"Does she live here?"

"She is here sometimes, not always."

"Well, she must be a beautiful woman—even more beautiful than you depict her."

"You understand," said the child. "I cannot put her on paper as I see her. I know but little of drawing, but I am always trying to draw faces—the faces of my own people—and trees, for they are my own people too; but I am never satisfied with my work. They do not get on the paper as they are in my mind."

"Why not have some instruction?"

She shrugged her shoulders.

The stranger understood, but in order not to seem to, he began to pick up some scattered leaves of paper near him. Seeing that they contained writing he was about to lay them down with an apology when the child said:

"It is a letter I have written to Helen, the woman whose picture you have just been looking at. You may read it, only not aloud. I couldn't stand that."

"But why should I read it at all?" he said,

"It would be impertinent on my part. Besides, I am not afflicted with the despicable vice of curiosity."

"If you don't mind, I wish you would read it," she said. "It may help me. You will understand when you have finished." But she looked ill at ease, nevertheless.

The stranger read :

MY DEARLY BELOVED HELEN:—Since you went away I am very lonely indeed. None other is so near and dear to me as you. I fill the hours with thoughts of you—thoughts so intense and absorbing that at times I actually see you by my side. But, alas! you do not stay when you come like that. You fade out of my sight; you go back to your world and I cannot follow you only with my thoughts, my dreams, my love and my letters.

But I shall go and find you some day. I shall be one of the people of your world, and shall be busy with work which shall fill my time, my brain and my heart. I shall meet all my people there—my very own people, and shall love them and work with them and know loneliness no more. I have a story to tell you, Dear Heart. It is this:

In a world nameless to all mankind, lived a woman, sweet and fair. It was a beautiful world. There the men were all true and the

women all faithful. Misery was unknown and none sought happiness, for all possessed it.

But this one woman dreamed dreams and saw visions. She heard voices calling to her from another world—a world whose people sought continually and vainly to attain a condition they knew only in name, and which they called Happiness. All believed in the existence of this condition and gave chase to it, each in his own way, but none found it. Often hearing the voices of these unhappy people and seeing them in visions, this woman longed to go and help them. The longing disturbed the harmony of life in all her world, until it was decreed that she must leave it and go to that other whose vibrations of anguish had shaken the spheres. But they did not tell her of her destiny. “She will know when she is there,” they said.

So she slept, and the sleep was long in the eyes of the children of Time.

When she awoke, memory was gone, and everything had to be learned over again. At first her consciousness was very dim, and her strength feeble, and having slept so long she could scarcely keep awake at all.

But after a time a faint memory of the past came to her, and she saw that all was different from that other time, which now seemed like a dream. This was not the same world, nor were these the same people she had known, for she was

in the sad world she had seen in visions, whose people so persistently and often frantically sought Happiness and never found it—and that sad world was this in which we live.

She was changed in appearance, too, for when she looked in a mirror she saw a face that was new to her and a tiny figure. She was like a child, and everybody called her a child, though to herself she seemed not to be a child, because part of her memory had come back, and it was the memory of a woman.

It was very hard to feel like a full-grown person in mind and be treated like a creature with almost no mind at all. One of the most painful things she saw was that sometimes the most ignorant and unfeeling were in positions of power over sensitive children. She suffered much from the very beginning of consciousness.

To go back to the world she could so dimly remember was her one dream. But when she spoke of it those about her laughed and said she had never been in any other world, because there was no other.

Once in a dream she went back, or perhaps it was that some of her old friends came to her. They told her to be patient; that she had been sent to help the unhappy ones who had so often called to her; that scattered all over the planet in which she dwelt now were others like herself, who had come for the same purpose; that she

would meet them from time to time and that would pay her for much of her pain.

They said, too, that she had a particular work to do here and could not leave until it was done, but she must find out what it was herself; that the road would often seem very hard and very long, but it had an end, and if she did her work well —

There the dream ended; but it comforted her, all unfinished as it was.

By and by her childhood was gone. She was a woman, and went forth to find her work, earnest, enthusiastic and eager, and they said she had precious gifts.

“I will paint pictures,” she said, “for always in my mind are noble faces and figures, like the gods when they walked among men, and these shall show mankind how glorious it can itself become.”

Beautiful creations, perfect shapes of beauty came forth from her hand, but the world, for the most part, passed them by. It said, “We see nothing in these,” and it spoke the truth, for that in them could only be seen by those like unto them.

A few, however, stood before them filled with delight. They were people of the planet from which the artist came, and they recognized their kindred in the faces and forms she had depicted; but she herself was never satisfied with what she

had done. Within her mind, faces more glorious, and forms more perfect struggled for expression.

"I have a tale to tell," she said, "that many will be glad to hear, for it contains help for all." But again the world did not understand. It said, "The people of this book are impossible people, and what is the author trying to say? We see nothing in it." A few only understood; but these were of her planet.

"Now," she said, "I will write again, and this time the world will read and be charmed. I will give it what it wants, not what I want to give it."

She spoke truly. She wrote and many were pleased; but the people of her planet closed her book with pain in their faces, and she herself found no joy in it. To her conscience she made this excuse: "I want bread and the easy, comfortable things of life, and the world wants foolishness, so we exchange products. Some day I will write that which pleases myself. Then I shall make no concessions, no bids for favor. I shall say what I feel and think."

Time went on, and the world became interested in new names, and almost forgot hers. Days of discouragement and distress arrived. The ease which she had bought by pleasing the commonplace, vanished, and loneliness, ill-health and poverty came in its stead. Weary

and sick unto death in spirit and body, she longed to end it all, and so longing fell asleep, and sleeping dreamed.

She saw again the faces of those from her other world who had come to comfort her when a child. One, the most beautiful of all, and yet just now the saddest, seemed nearer and dearer than the others. It was a glorious face, radiant with strength and sweetness, a type of perfect womanhood. All her life it had visited her in dreams and haunted her imagination. Sometimes the name that belonged to it hovered on her lips, yet was never spoken, for it always vanished before it took shape in her mind.

"Did you find your work?" they asked.

"I tried hard, dear friends," she said. "I have not been idle." But their faces showed no joy.

"Have I not done my work well?" she questioned, beginning to be afraid.

"Have you given your best?" they asked.

A flush of shame covered her face. "No; the world did not want it."

They were silent, and there was that in their eyes which made her more and more ashamed.

"I needed bread," she said, anxious to make excuse.

"Is bread all that is worth striving for, that you paid for it so high a price?" they asked.

She was silent.

"Did you come to please or help the people of this world?" they asked.

"You told me long ago that I came to help," she answered, "but they made it very hard. When I wrote that which burned within my soul they cared not to hear it, but wanted something that entertained and diverted them from what they call the cares of life; and I—well, I was often hungry—so I gave them what they wanted."

"And did they reward you?"

"You see I have nothing," she answered. "For a time I had some of the possessions all value so much; but they are gone."

"You tried to tell these people what you thought and felt, but they would not listen, you say; so you told them little foolish tales, like those that please children, but instruct not, help not, and thus you passed your life neglecting to unfold your own soul by expressing it truly. Only the weak and feeble of will, or the indolent and indifferent, turn back at the first obstacle. Where was your faith?"

"I sold it, as you see, for a pitiful price," she answered, weeping.

"And were you satisfied?"

"Never. My conscience always lashed me. I have been punished already. Give me no further penance."

"It is not ours to punish or pardon, nor in all

the universe is there either punishment or pardon. There is only unchangeable, ever-active law. Had you done your work well"—

"What is it to do one's work well?" she interrupted.

And now the woman of the glorious face came near and answered: "It is to give the highest and best that is in you, without caring whether it will please or offend; to express truth, as you see it, though the world be against you; to pay whatever price is asked, though it be starvation and disgrace for the freedom of your soul, for the soul is only free when it faithfully follows its IDEAL."

"Then I know I have not done my work well," said the woman, sadly. "I seldom gave my best. I had not the courage. I was afraid the price I would have to pay would be too high. But what is the fate of those who do not do their work well?"

The faces of the company were full of pity, as they answered, "They must do it over again."

Then the woman wept aloud. "But not just yet," they said. "You are very tired; your strength is gone. You shall rest for a time."

Then one touched her eyes gently, and they closed to the light of this world!

Helen, dearest, I dreamed that story, and I was the woman who did not do her best. It always seems to me that I lived long ago some-

where—many lives perhaps. At times I can almost remember scenes and people of that far-off time. It may be that it was right here in this world, and that I have been sent back to do what I left undone. Or it may be that here in this life I shall not do what I ought to do, and must come again. Ever with me is the thought that there is some particular thing for me to do and that I must make haste to find it and do it, because the time is short.

Part of my work is to find my people—thy own people whom I knew in that far-away life, you are one of them, and —

The stranger laid the unfinished letter down and looked curiously at the author. He had not observed her closely until then. He saw in her face that which is higher than beauty, but is only seen and understood by its spiritual kindred. The mouth, that unmistakable key to character, because it is the door through which the soul expresses itself, was perfect in shape and exquisitely sensitive, though the other features had a dash of boyish ruggedness in them. But the eyes, the dark grey eyes, mottled with tawn, had in them a look, indefinable, yearning, appealing,—a look that might have ages of suffering behind it—and perhaps before it—that went to the stranger's heart like a knife, and filled his eyes with a mist. In after years more than one strong spirit lost its

strength and wept it knew not why, before that flash-light of a soul.

In the same moment the stranger saw another thing. It was that the child was entirely without self-consciousness and the consequent coquetry which so often spoils the manners of even very little women. She was not thinking how she appeared in his eyes. He could see that. It was nothing to her that her feet were naked, her hair twisted and her clothing crumpled. It was plain that these unconventional facts did not even present themselves to her mind. Her shoes and stockings and big straw hat lay near her on the grass, and she gave no sign of embarrassment because she was not arrayed in them. She met him on the ground of mind to mind. In her shining, yearning eyes was an eager interest.

"A free, original, aspiring spirit," he mused. "Life will be a rough pilgrimage for her. She will find it hard to shape herself to iron-clad standards. The vast army of the commonplace, unable to understand her, will claw at her like birds of prey. It is a pity that she must be bruised and beaten into the usual shape, as she surely will be. But the world is a relentless potter, with inflexible ideas of how its human jugs and vases are to be modeled; and it shapes us all, in a measure, in spite of ourselves."

"If the question isn't impertinent, how old

are you?" he asked, with a cadence of melancholy in his voice.

"Eleven; but I feel *very* old sometimes. Old, old, old!"

"Yet you are not old enough to be writing of loneliness," he said.

"Ah; you think so? Can you imagine the loneliness of a child who is not altogether a child and yet not a woman?"

"Where are your dolls?" he asked, hoping to divert her mind from subjects too serious.

Her handsome mouth curved into a sneer. "Dolls?" she echoed. "Dolls? Poor, miserable little images made by stupid people to deceive those they believe to be stupider. Well, I have several. They were given to me by foolish friends who meant to be kind; but they live in boxes upstairs. I never get any good from them, wretched imitations of people that they are, with expressionless faces and stuffed bodies. I prefer my own people."

"The lady of the picture and letter is one of them, you said. But of course they are not all grown up like her."

"Yes, they are, for I like grown-up people best. I don't like those of my own age. At least I have seen but few whom I liked. The reason I am so fond of my own people, is because I make them myself, and so, of course, I make them to suit me. They are charming, and very

fond of me. You would call them unreal; but to me they are more real than the flesh and blood people hereabouts, and much more agreeable."

"Ah! I understand now," said the stranger. "They are your own people in the sense of being congenial, companionable, of your own way of thinking. You have gone direct to a great truth, little friend. Our own people are those with whom we are in intellectual sympathy, no matter where we find them."

"But your other people," he went on, after a short pause, motioning with his hand toward the house, "your family,—you love them, too?"

"No; we don't love each other," she answered, frankly; "we seem not to fit well together—not to be thinking the same thoughts. The most of me is completely shut away from them. I cannot talk to them as I am talking to you. They would laugh at me; they would ridicule me, and that enrages as well as hurts me. And they are going away one by one, interested in their own lives and knowing nothing of my dreams and longings. Two of my sisters married recently and have gone far away, and last week my oldest brother left. I watched him out of sight as he went down the road, with my heart almost bursting. So it was when the others went. Everything was desolate without them, and they will never be back here again in the old way. Not that the old way was so good, for it wasn't, but

I could not bear to see the end. I suffer if only an animal dies or is taken away. And I always wanted to love them; but they did not understand."

The stranger's eyes grew pitiful, not so much for what she had suffered as for what she was destined to suffer. He saw her as she was, and as no other had seen her, none having the power to understand,—a sensitive, affectionate, aspiring soul, held for a time in a place alien to her spirit, among people most truly not her own.

"Another," he said, mentally, "destined to travel the rough road that leads to the heights. Another with a dash of the weightiest gift of the gods. I did not think to find one of the climbers of Olympus here. Yet where none dreams to find them there they are. Poor little soul touched with the wand of genius, already living in a world of her own creation, because the other world is ungenial and intolerable, and longing for sympathy, which is recognition, appreciation, and encourages expression, which is life itself. The old, old spirit in the new body, not comprehended, often wounded, yet striving, striving, always striving against hard conditions to tell what it feels.

"But you have some friends of your own age among the real people—those we call real—have you not?"

"Yes; and I play with them sometimes in

their way; but in a little while I am tired of them, and am generally glad when they are gone, so that I can be with the friends I have been telling you about. But I have one comrade of my own age whom I love. She talks very little; but she understands. We often spend whole days together away from everybody. She doesn't fit into her family much better than I do in mine, but she is happier, because her family are kinder than mine. They love each other better."

The stranger was struck with the simple and forceful analysis of the difference between the two families.

"When people love each other they are kinder, as a matter of course," he said, feeling that he was guilty of the stupidest of platitudes, but anxious to keep the young philosopher talking. "But your family love you, surely?"

"No," she said, decisively, the mottled eyes showing a flash of pain so intense that he turned away.

"What makes you think so?"

"They find fault with me all the time. It is a terrible thing to be blamed always and never praised. When I am grown, should I have power, should I be able to get others to listen to me, I shall tell them that if they want to make people better they must praise them. Fault-finding helps nobody. I am sure of that. It is the worst possible thing for me, for it fills my heart

with rage and a sense of injustice, and of course it has the same effect on everybody else. I can see plainly enough what would make an angel of me, and angels of all others, too. Love and praise are what is needed. What couldn't I be and do if they only loved me and saw good in me, and told me so. But to be nagged, and blamed, scolded, rebuked and humiliated incessantly is making me wicked in my mind all the time. I know how devils are made. They just take a child, neither better nor worse than others, and put it some place where it hears nothing but blame all the time, never a word of love or praise, and when it is grown up it is a devil, ready to give back the pain that had been inflicted on it. If it were not for my own people, my thought people, I could not endure life at all."

"A bad case," said the stranger to himself, with a sigh, "heart and intellect both hungry. I fear the road will be very rough.

"Why did you let your friend Helen go away? Since she is your own creation, why not keep her here at will, when you are so fond of her?"

"She is my own creation, but I could not keep her here. She has her own life to live, so she went back to the world from which I drew her, for I do truly believe away down inside of me, that she is what you call real. Just now she is in Paris, and she is a famous author, but not too conceited to love me and find pleasure in talking

and writing to me. I was willing she should go away, as it gives me an opportunity of writing to her. I enjoy writing even more than talking, sometimes. I get letters from her often. I have a box full of them. Of course I have to write them myself, but after they are written it really seems that she, not I, is their author, and I enjoy reading them just as other folks enjoy sure-enough letters that come from the post office."

"How do you send letters to your people?"

The yearning eyes became grave. "Well, that is awkward. I leave them in queer little places where big, bad, real people are not apt to find them—at the root of a flower, in the crevice of a wall, or under a stone—and persuade myself that somehow they reach their destination. Sometimes I carry them clear to the woods and leave them in hollow trees, or under great, cool rocks, where, perhaps, there are fairies or some kind of invisible messengers who will transport them for me.

"But when it rains, now and then, they are washed out of their places, and I find them all wet and blurred. Then a chilly feeling comes over me, and I am half afraid that, after all, my people have not seen them. You see it hurts me if I think *nobody* reads them. That's why I wanted you to read my letter to Helen. I felt sure you would understand."

"You have many of these unseen friends of yours?" asked the stranger.

"Yes, many; but Helen is my only confidante. Of course I am not a little girl when I am with my people. I am grown up, and am important, for I, too, am a famous writer, and I paint the most wonderful pictures. Yes, I have great fame and the wisest and most distinguished people are pleased to be received by me, and they—well,—they hang upon my words."

"Of course," said the stranger.

"It is beautiful," continued the child, "to be treated with consideration. When will big folks learn that little ones are human beings like themselves, with the same feelings exactly, and that they can't respect themselves if they are ordered about rudely, scolded, snubbed and generally treated as inferior beings?"

She was enjoying the first appreciation the world had accorded her; was breathing the air of her dreams, the congenial atmosphere which is only found where there are sympathetic souls to breathe it with us.

The stranger, understanding, thought of "how widely yawns the moat that girds a human soul," whose "real world is always an invisible place, removed from the rush and chatter of crowds, for the most important portion of life is the secret and solitary portion."

"Are your people all women, or do you permit

poor, imperfect, earthly man to enter your paradise?" he asked.

"Our world is made up of human beings, and of course that means men and women," she replied. "It would be a stupid place if it contained only women or only men. But our men are men, not merely creatures who pass as such, like so many one sees walking about here. And yet, I must confess that the men of my thought world are not quite so real to me as the women. I want to make them excellent, perfect; but I don't succeed. When I get them just so far along, I seem unable to complete them, and so they are more or less dim and shadowy to me."

"Ah, I see," said her listener. "Your ideal of mankind is too high for even your imagination to give form to. What are these men like who still seem dim to you? Some of them are knights and lords of high degree, or kings, perhaps?"

"No; we don't care for that kind. They would be too conceited for our world. We don't like fighters, either. We have great men, of course, but they have earned their laurels; but even then they don't talk about themselves, till they tire one all out like living men do. But we will not have any who are not truthful, and then they are courageous, for liars are always cowards, you know. And then, they are kind, very kind to everybody, and they don't think themselves better than women. We couldn't

stand that, especially as our women are all so magnificent. I'm one of them, you know."

It was beautiful to him to see her so frankly reveal herself as she saw herself. "Your men do something, I suppose,—something more than to be merely agreeable?" he said.

"We all work, but we dream too, and the dreamers are prized as highly as the workers if they dream good dreams."

"For a dreamer lives forever,
And a toiler dies in a day,"

hummed the stranger softly.

Then in memory he turned to the past, murmuring, "Bohemia, thy grapes are sweet."

He saw again its hot and dusty highways, its tangled byways and the long procession traveling thereon. One by one they passed him in review, some with road-worn feet, faded garments and weary eyes; some stepping lightly, with joy in their hearts and flowers in their hands. There were the hopeful, the mirthful, the witty and the merry. There, too, were the baffled and beaten, the hopeless and the joyless. The successful went by with proud mien, and smiling face, and they who had failed also bore themselves erect and smiled, that the world might not dream of the pain at their hearts. "Their heads were bloody but unbound."

Grapes grew abundantly overhead, but a few,

only a very few of the many travelers gathered them. He saw it all in memory as he had seen it all in reality. Now, as one by one the struggling, striving throng, dowered with the fateful gift of genius, passed again before him, he saw that

“Their faces all showed suffering,
Though no voice uttered plaints.”

How courageous they had been! How faithful! Not a few had met starvation face to face, and even that dread sight had not power to turn them from the pursuit of their ideals. Again and again he had seen the bravest and brightest fall, their aim unattained, their hands empty, their names unrenowned, their hearts broken. But now he saw, as by a revelation, that the defeated were victors too.

Putting his hand over his eyes as if to shut out the sight of the striving, suffering throng, he groaned mentally, for here in this quiet spot, far from the great centres of life, was another getting ready for a pilgrimage on the same hot, dusty road.

The child was the first to break the silence into which they had fallen.

“My own people are somewhere in the real world, I am sure, and I must go and find them,” she said. “I was singing about it to this dear old tree when you came, for when I go the tree

will miss me and be lonely. We are great friends. I tell it many things, and it answers by waving its branches over me—see, like that, and I understand.”

“You are eleven years old,” said the stranger, “and are eager to go and find your people. I am many, many years older and yet have found very few of mine. The search is long and sometimes heart-breaking, but it has to be made. But remember one thing, and forget it not, I pray you. If you have some dream in your mind dearer than all others—some thought that burns to spring forth into life—be faithful to it, for it is your ideal. Follow it at any cost. Your story of the woman who did not do her best contains a great philosophical truth. Somewhere, sometime we are destined to reach a state where our dreams shall come true, where we shall have the desire of our hearts, where we shall be in accord with all beauty and all good. But we can only reach that state by doing our best every day—in little things and great. If we do less we shall have to do it over again.

“One is with you who always knows. it is your soul—your real self. When you want to find your work, when you are ready to tell what you feel, ask not the world what it wants, but say to your soul, ‘What wilt thou have me to do?’”

She looked at him admiringly, gratefully, and

said, "I thank you. I know you are wise, for you come from the big, busy world that I long to enter, and shall enter. There one can see and learn everything. Less than a mile away two railroads cross each other. I hear the locomotives whistle every day as they pass, dragging people after them. I shall go, too, some day, and then, and then"—

"And *then*," said the stranger, sighing; but she did not understand. How could she?

"And then I shall be happy," she added.

"You must find me when you come into my world," he continued, after a pause. "Perhaps I am one of your own people. At any rate, the great world knows me a little. Now I must leave you and go back to where the two railroads cross. My train was hours behind time, otherwise I should not have had the pleasure of meeting you. I assure you I shall not forget you, and when you come into my world I shall know you for one of us, even as I know you now."

They had risen as he spoke. He took her slender, sunburned hand in his, bent down, kissed it and was gone.

"He is truly one of my very own people," said the child to herself, as she watched him out of sight. "Now I am sure they live somewhere, and I shall find them and know them as soon as I see them, and shall be happy."

CHAPTER II.

WHERE THE ROAD DIVIDES.

“O Urania! the earth and the air and the sea
And the infinite spaces are vocal with thee,
And the sunset and moonrise seraphic with thee.”
—*Ben S. Parker.*

THE tall young man alone on the porch walked slowly back and forth, looking off into the sweet spring sunshine, with troubled eyes.

He stopped and his face flushed with pleasure as a young girl dressed for the street came out of the door.

“You here, Mr. Kendall?” she said, interrogatively. “You toil not neither do you spin to-day? How’s that?”

“Because I am weary and fain would rest,” he answered. “Yes, and I fain would do several other things, too; but I dare say I shall not. But you have been idling lately, too. Why so?”

She shrugged her shoulders. “Like yourself I am weary and fain would do—I scarcely know what, and go I scarcely know where.”

“Do you mind my asking whither you are bound just now?”

“Not at all,” she answered, pleasantly, “only I can’t say definitely, because I don’t know. I

shall probably fetch up at the nearest open square where there is some green grass on which I can rest my eyes a bit, and either lose myself or find myself for a little while."

"May I go with you?" He made the request a little timidly, for she had a high-handed way with him that made him a little afraid of her, though she attracted him with resistless force.

"I shall be pleased." Her voice had a sincere ring in it that flushed his face with pleasure. "You are always a good companion, because you don't tire me talking too much."

"A dubious compliment, but I am grateful for it, nevertheless. Though if it be intended as a hint for me to keep silent this morning it will not be taken, that's all."

They walked away together with the manner of persons accustomed to seeing much of each other.

The wide old streets had birds twittering in the trees, and sunshine warm upon them. The air was soft and mild, and brought with it the gentle melancholy peculiar to spring, a melancholy that creates or awakes a strange unrest, and makes us long to go journeying to far countries, we know not why.

Each of these two were touched by the spirit of this unrest. They spoke of the beauty of the day, of the joy of idling now and then, so sweet to busy people, but soon fell into silence, for

their thoughts were not with their words. The young man's eyes became misty from time to time, though his companion saw it not, for she did not look at his face. He was thinking that in after years he should often recall this walk. On his mind he was painting every object his eyes encountered, that he might treasure it as a comforting picture in the possible lonely future.

After wandering about awhile they sat down in a tiny park near a fountain, and idly watched the water spraying in the sunshine.

"How long have you been here, Miss Hill?" Kendall asked abruptly.

"Four years," she answered, tossing a pebble into the fountain and showing little interest in anything but her own thoughts.

"And I five."

As she said nothing, presently he went on: "Now, I want you to do me a service, a real service. I want you to decide a question, an important question for me, and I have determined to abide by your decision, whatever it may be. Yes, I will do exactly as you say."

Expecting a word or look of interest from her, he paused; but she went on drawing lines on the gravel walk with her parasol, in silence. Being of the large, fair type of man, his face flushed with every emotion. Just now he colored deeply because of her apparent unconcern, but continued:

“There are times in each life when it is necessary to do one of two things. Until we reach this point we get on very well, and are untroubled by doubts. But when we have to decide whether to keep the right hand road or take the left, then we look about for something or somebody to cast the die for us. The doing is always comparatively easy; it's the deciding that muddles and troubles us. Now I have come to the place where the road divides, and I want some help on the decision.”

She looked up at him now with unaffected interest.

“I am thinking that I ought to strike out and do something better than I am doing,—be something more than a cog in a great machine. I am tired of that. In the office over there”—making a motion with his hand in the direction of the commercial part of the city—“are men who would faint, I am sure, or weep like children, if they should lose their situations, such cowards have they become by long dependence on the weekly salary. Some have been there years, and have given their manhood as well as their time in exchange for the money they pocket every Saturday. They act like slaves in the presence of their employer. If he had bought them at the auction block they could not be more cringing to him. When he is in sight self-respect withers and they are mere worms, crawling in

spirit at his feet. I don't want to become like that, and yet I am sure to if I remain. That sort of thing is contagious. No man can stand forever against it. I know just enough of the degrading feeling to be willing to make a sacrifice to avoid familiarity with it. In reality the wage-earner and the man who hires him engage in a form of coöperation, each to be respected by the other; but the relation is universally misunderstood. The employer develops into an autocrat and the employee into a serf, and so both are injured. To be an employee too long is to become a dependent, helpless, pitiable being, a degenerate man. I am sure of it. Believing that, I feel I must escape from such direful consequences.

“Yet it takes courage to voluntarily give up what they call a good salary, and go into the wilderness, so to speak, and take the risks that all that implies. A ship sails from New York for San Francisco day after to-morrow. I have been thinking I would resign my situation and take passage on her. The territories are big and full of opportunities. I thought to go to one of them and carve out life for myself on broader lines, if possible. I have a little money, and I can still put forth effort. As I have no family to consult—not a relative in the world—and being on the fence, as it were, in the matter of deciding, I have a fancy for leaving it to you and

will do what you say. Tell me, shall I go or stay?"

She looked at him with something like admiration shining in her eyes.

"Go," she said, unhesitatingly. "Go, and be an individual, a fully developed unit, a man, not a mere cog in somebody else's wheel. Cogs have their uses, but they have also their limitations, and they are so plentiful. You can be a whole machine, if you try. Yes, go and be a figure in the world, on your own account, not simply a cipher, useful only as auxiliary to the figures."

"Good!" he said, with forced emphasis, making a brave effort to appear delighted, but in his heart wishing he could hide somewhere and take it out in a hearty schoolboy blubber. "Day after to-morrow at this time I shall be aboard my ship."

He knew that her decision was wise, but it pained him that she was so ready to send him. And then, there was the ordeal of parting from her, a tug of war he could not calmly face.

"You should go for the sake of preserving your self-respect," she continued, "lest in time you become like the slavish wretches by whom you are surrounded, and also to preserve your life if you care for it. Two years more here bent over your desk in dingy, close rooms, and you will be hopelessly ill of consumption."

"I have thought of that," he said, "and it has something to do with my wish to get away."

“Well, when you go elsewhere, don’t make the mistake of beginning the same kind of life over again. Don’t imprison yourself, and don’t hire yourself out to any man. The air of the West will not save you unless you breathe it fresh and pure. Live outdoors as much as possible. How hideous is this habit of herding in cities—hideous and hurtful! How sensible of you to think of going where there is breadth, freedom and outlook in all senses of the words; but I am surprised, because I never heard you express any discontent.”

“To be honest, I had very little—too little for my own good,” he said, coloring deeply. “It has cost me a struggle to force myself to think of going. Don’t forget that it is you who are sending me after all; but for you I swear I should not go.”

“I am sure I am doing you a service,” she answered, “though I shall miss you, as a matter of course.”

“And you, what of your future? You advise me to leave this plodding existence, where there is neither growth nor freedom, and go where I can be more than I ever can be here; but you are passing your life in exactly the same jog-along way.”

“I—oh! I, too, shall be gone some day.” As she spoke she smiled, looking afar off.

“If I make a place for you will you come?” he asked.

There was nothing lover-like in his voice or attitude, yet he loved the girl beside him with a faithful, dog-like, worshipful affection. Not loving him, and not having a grain of coquetry or even vanity in her, she had never been aware of it. Even now, when his meaning became plain to her, she did not make a situation of it, or give it the slightest shading of the sentimental. Entirely unmoved herself, she knew not what the avowal cost him, made in the face of defeat, as he well knew beforehand.

“Oh, dear, no,” she said, simply, without a shade more or less of feeling in face or voice. “If I were a man, yes, I would go; but as it is, no. Be grateful that you are a man and have no hampering, cramping sex limitations to work against in the public mind if not in your own. You are free to go where you will and to do what you wish, and if it be but half-way well done, both fools and wise will chirrup your praises. One thing I ask of you. Throughout your life, never lose an opportunity of helping womankind to a freer, better, broader life. Do this in memory of me, and if I meet you in the future, either here or on the other side of life—should there be another side—I shall not fail to thank you.”

“I promise, and doubtless shall do more than that, in memory of you.” The last words had a quaver of agony in them, which she did not sense.

"I have been growing restless of late, too. Some day I shall be gone—perhaps before long." She looked afar off with dreamy eyes as she spoke, and Kendall's heart ached as he realized at last, that in the future of her dreams he had no part or place.

"Do not forget, wherever you may be, that I am always your loyal, humble servant," he said, gently.

"I am sure of that, and I thank you," she answered, with kindness in her voice.

It was like the man that he did not try to relieve his almost bursting heart by talking of his love for her, even though it was without hope, but he understood none of the arts of Eros, and was disciplined in repression.

In truth, it was preposterous that he should dream of winning this woman, and in a vague way he always knew it; yet he had dreamed. From the day he first saw her she had enthralled him, an achievement of which she seemed altogether unconscious, though everybody else read it clearly enough.

They had met daily in their common home, a boarding-house, for four years. They had enjoyed concerts, plays and lectures together; had walked and talked together and been good comrades and yet had never agreed. Nothing under the sun did they see from the same point of view, and the topic upon which they thought alike had

never been found. In spite of this, Kendall patiently worshipped at her shrine. Had he not been of the steady, hopeful, never-give-up brand of lover, he would have lost heart long before. But he had the confidence of the self-satisfied and shortsighted, and a heart that held on to its fancies with the desperate clutch that wins sometimes when finer methods fail.

To his credit be it said that while his devotion was open and above-board, for all the world to see, he was never obtrusive. Early in his acquaintance with his torturer he had learned to take a third or fourth place about her candle and make no fuss. He was at her service whenever she needed him, and always out of the way when she didn't need him.

Many a night he had climbed to his fourth-story room, humming a cheery song, while his heart was being gnawed in holes by the monster Jealousy, all because Miss Hill was chatting and laughing in the parlor with some of the other moths who circled about her. When chaffed about his ill-requited devotion, he laughed it off, and said he was happy to be tolerated at all. To himself, as a matter of graveyard whistling, he said: "It is a question of waiting. She cares for none of them. When she tires of them she may think of me. Meanwhile I think of her because I can't help it."

He kept this up for four years. Then a rest-

lessness of spirit came upon him; the unseen forces of destiny began to work upon his mind and urge him to go forth, he knew not where. Yet how could he go out of the sight of her, voluntarily? There was but one thing that would give him the required courage, and that was to make her bid him go. Then he could feel that, at least, he was obeying her, hence his little plan of having her cast the die. It might comfort him in the future.

The four years of their life together under the same roof rolled through Kendall's mind in panorama, and filled his heart to bursting. The daily sight of the girl beside him had sweetened the days—had been life itself to him, for she radiated light and life, like a sun. That she did not love him, mattered little in that moment. The years in which he had lived in her presence could not be taken from him. Remembering this his spirit was lifted up, and the poor, common, selfish ambition to possess her vanished, and the joy of having known and loved her took its place.

He looked at her long, earnestly, adoringly, photographing her on the fadeless walls of memory that he might carry the picture with him through all the years to come.

"I want to make a confession to you, Miss Hill," said Kendall, when he thought the mental photograph of her was complete. "You have

converted me to broader views, not by words, but by your daily life. I see you filling a useful place, unaided, in a profession that only men, heretofore, to my knowledge, have attempted. You not only succeed, but you excel most of your male co-workers. You make as much money as any of them, and you have more brains, and you command everybody's respect. Thinking over these things, I am ashamed to remember that I thought I ought to vote, but women must be kept from it at all hazards. Your example has enlightened me by taking some of the masculine conceit out of me. I feel small and mean that I in my insignificance should have thrown a straw in the path of women like you."

"I am glad your mental horizon has widened," she said. "It will be a pleasure to think of you as one of my converts. I may never make another, unless, as in this case, it be done by example and not argument. I begin to believe that discussion availeth little. When I hear poor, undeveloped beings fighting the ideas that would make them free, I do nothing to convert them to my way of thinking, I just silently say, 'May God enlighten them,' for that's all that can be done, and the enlightening process is usually slow."

"I remember now," he said, "that I haven't been able to draw you into a discussion in many a day. I suppose you saw it was a hopeless case and just simply prayed for my enlightenment."

“Yes; and it has come sooner than I expected. So now I am more than ever persuaded that argument is useless. None can be taught until ready to learn. ‘Except ye become as little children’—receptive, teachable, ready for light—applies to entering all kingdoms as well as the heavenly one.”

“While I am confessing,” said Kendall, “I will tell you that I used sometimes to take sides against you for the pleasure of hearing you express yourself—you do it so well.”

She looked at him and her eyes made him ashamed, as she said: “That was not kind. I was always in earnest. However, I am learning a little more about human nature every day. I shall soon cease to be a Galatea, I think.”

“No; it was not kind nor honest, but I did not realize it until this moment, and now I ask your pardon. Many of the offences of us men are the outcome of ignorance rather than meanness. We know no better. Our conceit has stood in the way of our enlightenment. Forgive all my shortcomings, and remember my defects no more. Be a little kinder still and do one other service for me. Read me my future.”

“I am no occultist,” she answered, laughing.

“No matter. I have a fancy for believing you are for the time being. Tell me what lies ahead. It may keep up my courage. Since you are my confessor, I don’t mind telling you that there are

moments when I feel a childish cowardice about what I may have to meet, and wish I could run away from it all and hide forevermore."

"That recalls a bit of rhyme I read years ago which has always stuck in my memory," she said :

" 'What is Life, Father? A battle, my child,
Where the strongest arm may fail;
Where the wariest eye may be beguil'd,
And the stoutest heart may quail.' "

'Tis no shame to admit that one's courage is not always high. No one lives always on the heights. I know something about those moments of childish cowardice you speak of; but there, I belong to the sex that is supposed to have the right to be cowardly—we are even driven to it. Courage brings reproach upon us, while the more we shrink and cower and quail and complain the more 'womanly' we are said to be. What a fine outlook for the human race! But as to your future. Now I am an astrologer and must draw your horoscope." (This was accomplished by scratching several circles on the walk with the end of her parasol.) "There, the rings and dots and figures all mean tremendous things. I shall not weary you, however, by telling you the why and wherefore of everything. I shall stick to facts. Here goes: I see a journey by water which ends where the sun sets. You will meet disappointments and difficulties; will know pri-

vations and dangers, and also that most dreadful form of homesickness—the homesickness of one who has no home. But you will overcome all obstacles and be what is called successful; you will find your place and hold it. You will become bigger and stronger in body and in character, and you will *never come back here.*”

“And the indescribable thing called Happiness; has it no place in my horoscope?” he asked, after a pause.

“Is it not included in the thing called Success?” she answered. “Can the defeated be happy?”

“On the whole your reading is not half bad, as the English say, when they want to compliment a thing, and I believe in it.” Yet he sighed as he spoke. The promised success was not alluring, meaning as it did, lifelong separation from the sun that warmed his life.

Still he was in dead earnest when he said he believed in her prophecies. Long ago he had made up his mind that this girl was his fate—not in the sense that she was likely to unite her life to his. He had never been honestly hopeful of that in spite of his steady perseverance; but it seemed to him that in some way she was to direct his life, to be the star of his destiny, as it were. And never was that belief stronger upon him than now when he knew that the end of their daily association had come.

Rising, she said, "Let us each cast a pebble in the pool of this fountain and see whose circles will last longer."

As they watched the rings widen, multiply and vanish until those made by her pebble had obliterated his, he said,

"There! Your spirit will trouble the waters of life to greater purpose than mine and longer. It needs no divination to tell that."

When they went back to the house they met Westfield coming out. "Will she eventually throw herself away on him?" was the query Kendall put to himself.

At the breakfast table next morning Kendall's chair was vacant, and the place was to know him no more under the sun.

CHAPTER III.

CONFIDENCES AND QUESTIONS.

“Too weak to change, though a mental hell
To me the rôle of clown;
A coward bound by a self-wrought spell,
I wait the sound of the prompter's bell
Which rings the curtain down.”

SUNDAY'S restfulness was in the air. Miss Hill and Westfield sat in the shade of the great tree in the yard, with books and newspapers about them. Nothing was more delightful to Westfield than to hear her read aloud. She had a voice of great natural sweetness, with no artificial notes in it. In truth there was no artifice in her character.

The man beside her to-day was one of whom poor Kendall had often been bitterly jealous, a man of finer fibre than his rival, greater charm and graver defects. Older, he was also wiser, particularly in melancholy wisdom.

“Read me something,” he said, “some wild wail from a tortured poet. There are always plenty, and I like 'em, no matter how woful they are. God bless the poets every one, high and humble. They help us out in the dreary business of life.”

She read:

“White-footed the snow comes,
O'er the hills of beauty,
Treading like a penitent
Rough paths of duty.”

“What an exquisite figure,”—he interrupted,—
“the personification of the snow, with white feet, like a penitent.” He had once made a bright mark in the world of letters, then ceased to strive and later ceased to care, so it might be supposed that his commendation was of some value.

“Miss Hill,” he said, with sudden animation,
“what are you going to do with your life?”

“Live it, if I am permitted.”

“How?”

“I have my dreams.”

“Of what?”

She smiled, looking far away, but kept silence.

“I can't make you out,” he said, a little peevishly. “I believe you have genius for literature, yet you seem to be perfectly indifferent about cultivating it. Were you like others one might suppose that love and marriage made up your dreams; but you are as indifferent to lovers as to possible fame. I don't understand you.”

“Well, it isn't worth while to bother about me,” she said. “I shall be gone some day.”

“I fear you will,” he answered, with feeling; “I have thought of it a thousand times, and dreaded to enter the house, lest I should not find you

there. A sense of your impermanence is always with me. You don't belong here in any sense, and I fear that Fate will not let you stay much longer. There is an unreality about your being here at all that is like the experiences we have when we sleep, real enough while they are occurring, but unreal to remember. Yes, you will be gone some day. Therefore, I shall take Fate by the forelock and go first, that I may not be here when you leave. I could not endure that. The very sight of the old house and this tree would then be intolerable to me."

His face and speech were impassioned, but the girl saw it not. That was what made her so exasperating to those whom she fascinated. She seemed incapable of seeing that she could fascinate. The truth was she was self-absorbed.

"You would miss me, I am sure," she said, in the most matter-of-fact tone, "and I should miss you greatly, if you were gone."

"Where will you go to when you leave here?" he asked.

"To my own people, I hope," she answered, dreamily, her eyes wandering away to the horizon.

"Tell me about them," he begged. "I have often tried to lead you to talk of them, but you never would. You are a tell-all, tell-nothing sort of person. Others do not notice that, but I do, and have woven some theories about it."

"I dare say they do me great honor, but in all probability they are far from true."

"Well, then, why will you not tell me about yourself?" he asked, in an injured tone.

"You talk as though I have been making history on this planet for ages. I am young; what could I have to tell that would satisfy your expectation of the extraordinary. You have known me here in this house for more than two years. As the Indians in the old story-books say, we have 'eaten salt together daily,' and we have walked and talked together with the freedom of children. What is there of me still unrevealed?"

"I don't know," he said, "but I feel there is something—a part of you and your experiences from which I and others are shut out, and that part is the greatest part of you. I argue that, because, although you attract many, myself, poor moth, among them, no one gets near to you. An invisible but formidable wall surrounds you, from which all our attempted gallantries rebound like arrows which strike rocks. And there you are behind it, always smiling and agreeable, but entirely unmoved and secure. Now, somebody or some experience built that wall, for it is not in the nature of things for it to be there without cause."

"Go on," she said, smiling, as he waited for her to speak. "You will end by being a great

architect yet. How like magic you put up that wall."

"You may chaff as much as you please," he said, a little savagely, "but I am not to be put off that way. Now that I have begun I am going to say some things seriously and you must hear them seriously."

"I told you to go on," she said, composedly.

"And so I will," he grumbled, "though I know perfectly well that it would be manlier if I kept silence. As you say, we have eaten and walked and talked together as freely as children for more than two years. In that time we have become well acquainted—not the poor, shallow acquaintance of formal society, but the near, intimate association of two human beings who honestly express themselves to each other. The result of this comradeship is that I love you. I will not say I have learned to love you, for something of the fact was clear to me the very first time I saw you. In all probability you don't remember the incidents of that day at all, but I do. Brooks, our good host, as you know, is my old friend. I had drifted to this city in an aimless way, as I had been drifting for years. He met me and brought me home to dinner with him. I have always adored intellect in man or woman. One look into your eyes told me that you are of uncommon endowments. Then, along with a beautiful but simple stateliness of manner, you

have certain childish graces of which you are unconscious. You have never put your childhood entirely away from you. I particularly noticed the correct school-girlish arrangement of your knife and fork at the end of the dinner, and was charmed by it. After we left the table I said to Brooks that you had wonderful eyes. He agreed with me, but warned me not to let them undo me, because he said you were constructed on a novel plan, one man being the same as another to you, and all being as nothing.

“I paid no attention to his warning, as you see. On the contrary, when he went to the *Times* office and secured me a situation, I accepted it gratefully, because I could then become a member of his household and see you every day. I have loved you ever since, and have had much quiet joy in it, and it has bettered me in many ways. I know perfectly well—I have always known—that you do not love me, and in my least selfish moments I am glad of it, because I have nothing to offer you that is fit for you to accept. I would not tell you that I love you—never a word of it—were I not sure that it will not hurt you. In the years to come the memory of it may comfort you. It is a great comfort to me now, hopeless as it is. It helps me only to tell it. O my child, my heart has long been sick and sore from bruises the like of which I pray you may never know. We men are set up to be

so strong and pretend to be so self-satisfied, but we are only grown-up children after all. When we are sore in spirit we long for some loving woman soul to take us to her arms and pet and soothe us mother-like, yet we often live our lives without it.

“I am fifteen years older than you, and know the world well—better than I wish I did—so well that I should like to protect you from its ugly phases. Yet I am powerless to do it. Never did I so deeply lament my aimless, wasted life as now, when I see myself with nothing to offer you and yet loving you with all my heart. Sometimes, since I have known you, I have dreamed that with your help I could pull myself together and make something of my life yet; but the dream is only temporary—it flees, the reaction comes and I sink back to the *rôle* of a nobody which I have long been playing, and doubtless shall play to the end—an end that I may make for myself any day.

“To say that I despise myself for being the wretched failure I am is to express myself but lamely. My love has in it an element of the paternal. I am not thinking so much of what you might be to me, but of what I earnestly wish I might be to you. I long to shield you from the infinite horror of the experience we call life, as it is revealed to many. You are like a tall young pine-tree standing alone on a high rugged

and rocky mountain side, enjoying the sunshine and swaying gently in the summer breeze, not knowing that the winter of the future will bring storms that may tear its roots from the earth. You know not your own value, that is the danger. Some day you may give your love and have your heart broken. That's what happens to strong souls usually, and you are one of them. I know the answer to the woman poet's question:

““Is it so, O Christ in heaven, that the highest suffer most?
That the strongest wander farthest, and most hopelessly are
lost?”

That the mark of rank in nature is capacity for pain,
And the anguish of the singer, makes the sweetness of the
strain?”

““I have many things to tell you, but ye cannot bear them
now.”

“Yes, I know the answer to that, and it makes me anxious about your future. Behold the pitiful spectacle of a man who loves a woman, tells her of it, and yet confesses himself a hopeless failure.”

“But why do you insist upon considering yourself a failure?” asked Miss Hill. “You are not old, you have good health, education, ability, the necessary ingredients for achievement.”

“Child, you do not understand. How could you? the ruin is within, not visible on the outer walls.”

“No; I do not understand,” she said.

"I will tell you," he said, "how I came to be a loiterer in the race, what

"——wrought my woe,
In the diamond morning of long ago,'"

as the song says. You see I began by asking you about yourself, and, with the artless art that distinguishes you, with scarcely a word, you have switched me off the track I had taken and set me talking about myself instead. I shall lose in your respect after I tell my story, as a matter of course, but I would rather you knew it.

"Years ago, in the days when the earth was new and sweet to me—in the mountain-moving period of life, the tragedy began. I loved, and like the lover of Annabel Lee I may say that the angels of heaven coveted the love of her and me. I was one of the editors of the most prosperous daily newspaper in the city that was my home, my uncle being its proprietor. He had no children of his own, and had brought up my brother and me, our parents having died, when we were very little.

"A sensational criminal trial was before the courts of a distant city, and it was arranged that I was to attend it and send daily letters to my journal. As it promised to last several weeks, the separation from Emma looked unendurable. I must marry her and take her with me. But when I told my plan to her she said she couldn't

leave her father, who was old, feeble and almost blind, with nobody else to care for him. In my selfishness I had forgotten him. 'I cannot go with you,' she said, 'but I am willing to marry you before you go. It will comfort me while you are gone just to know that I am your wife.'

"So we married, telling no one but Emma's father. The secrecy was needless and foolish, but when young we are all more or less enslaved by the ways of others, and this was too violent a departure from custom to be proclaimed just then."

"Ours was an unusual but not unhappy honeymoon. We wrote every day, long, glowing letters, and annihilated distance with our thought.

"But one day a telegram came announcing that my wife had been murdered—struck down in her own home, in the light of day, in the presence of her helpless old father.

"Behind the dreadful deed was the usual crazy rejected suitor. I knew the wretched boy well—he was but a boy—but never dreamed of the ghastly possibilities within his crooked mind. But what know we of any one? Who is safe from treating the community to a hideous sensation?

"He had long been fond of Emma, but lost hope when he saw that my attitude toward her was an assured one. But after I went away he

got it into his crazy head that we had quarreled, and took heart again. When he implored her to marry him, and she refused without telling him that she was already married, he shot her dead and then shot himself.

“Horror, grief, and remorse overwhelmed me. I blamed myself. Why had I not announced the marriage at once? Had the wretched boy known that Emma was my wife, he would have let her alone, I am sure. What did it avail that I put a tablet at her grave bearing the name of Emma Westfield? Humble as was the name it might have protected her had it been openly bestowed upon her.

“This happened ten years ago, before my friend Brooks, our host, ever met me. He knows nothing of it—doesn’t dream that I ever was married. To speak of it would oblige me to enter into explanations, to uncover my heart to gratify curiosity, which, however kindly meant, is always painful to a sore spirit. I tell you that you may understand I have at least the shadow of an excuse for being what I am, a man without purpose, a withered, useless branch of the human tree, waiting for the man with the pruning knife to come and cut me down.

“See the irony of fate. A few days after my wife’s death, my uncle died, leaving all his property to my brother and me. We were now owners of the newspaper on which we had

worked as employees, and of other valuable interest besides. It only emphasized my misery. Of all my possessions I could give nothing to the woman I loved—nothing but a stone at the end of a little heap of earth.

“It might have been better for me had I not inherited my uncle’s property, for it enabled me to idle away my time and indulge my selfish grief, until my will became enfeebled, and that means the crumbling of the whole character, which goes to pieces like an old wall.

“I went away, wandering over the earth aimlessly, not trying to benefit by travel, only hoping to make new scenes blot out the old, unbearable ones. I spent years in the vain effort to run away from myself. I am still engaged in that hopeless effort, though I have learned that it can’t be done. We take our world with us wherever we go—heaven and hell bring both within us.

“I am but a morbid idler, who has lost the qualities that give a man a place among men. Though I never tried to stifle memory and misery in debauchery, my money melted away. The coarse pleasures many men pursue never had charms for me, but my destruction was none the less sure. It has come without degradation, I am thankful to say, save that which any man must feel who has let himself slide down hill so far he never can climb up again.

“Once only since that dreadful thing happened have I accomplished anything. I braced myself against my inner foes long enough to write the little book you know. It gave me fame enough for a foundation for future work, had I followed it up ; but I didn’t. I fell immediately back into the clutches of the miserable devils who possessed me—made a complete and inglorious surrender to them for all time, caring naught who wins the prizes in the hateful race of life.

“My story proves me a contemptible weakling. I know I am not a whit above the cheap hero of the old-time, pirate novel, the fellow who does the gloomy, manages to look as though the hand of Fate was ever upon him, and has a secret sorrow as big as an omnibus, which he wants all the world to know. I am not made of the right kind of stuff or I should not have given up at the first blow of Destiny. ‘Man yields himself not to the angels nor even unto Death itself, save through the weakness of his own poor will.’

“Had Emma’s father lived, the care of him might have proved a prop to me, but the shock killed him, and he died a few weeks after she did. I had my brother, younger than myself, and we loved each other, but I argued that he did not need me, and left him. He loves me still and follows me with the kindest, dearest letters, and is always begging me to come back to him ; but I will not be a cloud upon his happiness

and prosperity. Yet his sympathy and yours are all that is left in the world precious to me.

“My love for you is different from my early love. In that day the castles I constructed were very worldly ones. Now, I have no worldly ambitions whatever. It seems to me that by some kind of kinship of soul, if there is such a thing as soul, you belong to me, and never can be taken from me, though our lives may be widely separated. If you were the vilest and most degraded creature in the world and yet were yourself, I should love you just the same.

“After Emma went away I tried hard to tear from Death its well-guarded secret. I wanted to know if the dark hole in the ground is the end of us all. I pounded fiercely on the very doors of the tomb, begging piteously for an answer. None came. No; never a word came out of the silence into which she had gone. The people who say they believe in a hereafter quote at us those exasperating scriptural questions: ‘O Death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?’ I can answer them. The sting is here, in my heart. The victory is over all my hopes, dreams and ambitions. People who believe! Are there any such? They only say they believe. It is all mere mouthing. Can any man believe that which he does not know? Their twaddle about faith and heaven enraged me. I wanted proof, proof—though but a whis-

pered word, the faintest touch of a vanished hand, or the tiniest scratch of a familiar pen. Proof! Proof! Oh for the proof that she lived somewhere. Had I had that I could have laughed long and loud at Death, the liar and the cheat. The merest thread of a rope would have served for me to hold to, I was so eager to believe. But nobody let it down to me—not then, nor in all the years since.

“Yet now, in spite of all that, when I look at you, I cannot persuade myself that you are to die—to cease from living. You carry with you a conviction of immortality. Your intense individuality seems like a deathless thing. It reminds me of the words of the young Greek in the drama of Ion. When his life was to be sacrificed, his beloved asks if they shall meet again. He says, ‘I have asked that dreadful question of the hills that look eternal—of the streams that flow forever—of the stars among whose fields of azure my raised spirit has walked in glory. All are dumb. But as I gaze upon thy living face, I see something in the love that lights its beauty which cannot wholly perish. We shall meet again, Clemanthe?’

“What answer have you for the question? ‘If a man die shall he live again?’”

“About that I think much, hope a little sometimes, but know nothing,” she said.

“No; we know nothing,” he echoed, with a

sigh; "but it is something to hope. I have a fancy that the road is not long ahead of me here, and I may soon have a chance to know what there is or know nothing. If we have an existence beyond this objective one, I may be able to help you from there. It would be helping you could I but come and tell you that I lived, would it not?"

"What greater service could you do me?"

"If I could do that I might do more. Who knows? Of course it is absurd to speak of helping you without explaining what I mean. Apparently you need nobody's help. You are strong of character, self-poised, capable, successful and fearless. I see all that, yet I cannot rid myself of the fear that you are destined to suffer much and will need the service and sympathy of all who love you. From life I have learned a little. When great strength is given I know it will be needed. And you are stronger in character than you know. I should like to save you from suffering, but were I ever so rich and powerful, I know I could not do it. You must meet your destiny, whatever it may be. As the Scotch say, 'must dree your weird.' Nobody else can live your life for you, for, alas! life admits of no proxy. I have woven many fanciful theories about you and your past, present and future."

"Tell me one," she said.

"I will give you my favorite. You are not what you seem to be—not less but more than you pretend to be. You have been tenderly reared and much loved. You are not here earning your bread because of necessity, but for some purpose not thought of by those with whom you come in contact. Having demonstrated your ability to stand alone, you will go back home some day and be done with it. You are supported in whatever otherwise would be hard, by the knowledge that you are free to turn your back upon it whenever you wish. Am I not a good clairvoyant?"

"Permit me to ask why you think as you do about me?"

"Because you give me the impression of not belonging where I find you. You seem to be playing a part and doing it with exceeding skill; but your real self is not in it. As you say, you will be gone some day to your own people. And now that I have confessed myself a failure and a fool, I too, shall go away."

"Why?" she asked, regretfully. "Why must the men and women who find each other companionable be lovers or nothing to each other? I am fond of you, very, not in the sentimental fashion, but as good comrade and friend. Why can't we go on just as we have been doing? That talk about loving me need make no difference."

"You are like a child about these things," he said. "You know not the creature man in his bondage to selfishness. You credit us with the strength of gods, and we are mostly such poor, ill-developed wretches that if we want what we cannot have we must run away to avoid showing how little we are masters of ourselves. But tell me what are you going to do with your life?"

"I have my dreams."

"Of what?"

"Happiness."

"Would it be offensive if I asked upon what particular brand of the article you have set your heart?"

"The most commonplace one in the world,—the love and companionship of him who is dearest."

Westfield was too astonished to say anything. Was the riddle so simple? Was this self-contained, independent girl following the same everyday illusion that lured all other women? While apparently caring nothing for lovers was she worshiping the one she carried ever in her heart?

"I will tell you all there is to tell," she said, after a moment, "and then you will understand."

He nodded assent, but felt his heart sinking.

CHAPTER IV.

HER STORY AND FATE.

“Who reads the riddle right?
And who can answer why
These clouds sweep over our mental life?
Not you, brave priest, nor I.”

“INSTEAD of being tenderly cared for, as you imagine,” said Miss Hill, “I had a loveless childhood, though above all things I wanted to be loved and to be told that I was loved. I could have been an angel of goodness had I had even a little love; but next to none was given me. If parents only knew that by showing love for their children they made for them a foundation of happiness which no after experiences could knock from under their feet, perhaps they would be kinder than some of them are. But why speak of ifs at all? If we knew at the beginning of life what we know at the end of it, perhaps we should never have to make the journey. I have thought often that I could bear my trouble courageously if I had sweet memories of childhood; but I have only bitter ones. Sometimes I have been unhappy since I have been earning my own bread among people unknown to me before, but never, never for a moment so miserable as I was always in the home into which I was born.

“I understand the reason of it all better now and blame nobody. The law was simply working itself out into its natural results. If I suffered—well, who doesn’t suffer as the mills of the gods grind, set in operation as they usually are by ignorant hands? My father and mother were natural enemies, who should have lived as far asunder as the poles, instead of enacting a hideous, lifelong tragedy in the name of marriage. I am quite sure they hated each other energetically most of the time and bitterly the rest of it, yet they stuck together and brought seven children into the world to suffer in a thousand ways from their incompatible union, and considered themselves virtuous in so doing. Yet, that is the kind of thing that passes for morality. Long ago I saw that it was a foul lie, and the direst foe to morality. When my eldest sister was married, and I heard the words ‘What God has joined together let no man put asunder,’ clinching the curse, as it were, it set me to thinking and asking questions. Somebody explained to me that all husbands and wives were joined together by God, and could not possibly be separated without going violently against His will, except by death, and that, of course, was in accordance with His will. I pondered over this with a heavy heart. Then God had united my father and mother. This dreadful work had been done by His hand, and I was wroth against

Him, for every day I felt and saw the evil effects of it.

“Is it strange that ours was a loveless family? With no love between husband and wife, could they be expected to love their children? Can a mother be expected to love the child who comes unwelcome to her arms? Can a father love children in whom he sees the features and traits of the woman to whom he is hopelessly bound and yet hates? We were all victims of violated law, so who was to blame? Ignorance! Ignorance, which is responsible for all the evil and all the suffering under the sun. In fact ignorance is evil, and evil is ignorance, nothing more nor less. You know Shakspeare says there is no darkness but ignorance.

“We frequently have well-meaning persons say that ill-mated married folk should stick together ‘for the sake of the children.’ Yet for that very reason they should separate. Their children and children’s children pay the penalty of their violation of the laws of harmony, and still farther down the line of the future goes the misery that had its origin in a hateful marriage. Pray tell me how is morality served thereby?

“In addition to the discord that made our lives wretched my parents were victims of the desperate struggle for existence, in which the finer qualities were squeezed out. This so absorbed them that the true meaning of home and family

escaped them, and the material side of the situation alone received attention. We were all wretched. It was a horrible experience. There we were, not of our own choice, wedged into an unwelcome place and unable to extricate ourselves. We were plainly told that whatever was done for us was to help make us able to take care of ourselves. We were urged to be industrious at school, because learning would enable us to be self-supporting. I never heard any other reason put forth in defence of education. This was dinned into our ears until life had but one meaning,—that of getting on in the world. The problem ended there. The result, I need hardly say, was to make us selfish. Instead of loving one another and sharing each others' burdens, each thought only of his or her individual success, and the cherished dream of all was to get away—to go forth where there was opportunity.

“I was next to the youngest, a sister, an extraordinary little being, who had brought with her traces of a wisdom not of the earth, and a recollection of conditions and surroundings more to her taste than our jarring household. She talked much of a home that she had had somewhere, and often wept to go back to it, nor could she ever be persuaded to call the place in which she found herself home. God knows how alien and comfortless it must have seemed to her delicate spirit. When three years old she left

us, such was her good fortune. At least it seemed good to me even then, and when they told me the usual fanciful tales of wings and a shining heaven, I envied her.

“One by one my sisters and brothers made haste to leave. So eager were they to get away that some took the first matrimonial boat on which they could secure passage, and thereby made sad shipwreck of their lives. How I longed to be loved. When I saw other children petted and caressed my heart swelled almost to bursting. The result of my unsatisfied longing was that I took refuge in my imagination and there lived a life as congenial and blissful as my outside life was distasteful and miserable. I surrounded myself with imaginary friends whom I loved and who loved me—charming, agreeable, superior people—men and women, not children. The misery that prevailed in our home had taken my childhood from me before I knew I possessed it. I early learned the solemn truth that ‘each soul in what is most itself, in what is deepest and nearest, lives alone, and that there is more loneliness in life than there is communion.’ I, too, like my little sister, suffered from a strange homesickness of the spirit, a longing for sympathetic association, for companionship, in short. I wanted congenial air, ‘that air which may be found everywhere, if we can find sympathetic souls to breathe it with us, and which is to be

found nowhere without them,—the air of the land of our dreams, of the country of the ideal.' Plotinus says 'Our true country is that from whence we came.' It has always seemed to me that far back in the past I lived somewhere and was happy. Now I am ever searching for the souls who are in sympathy with me, as in that far-off time. They are my own people, rather than those to whom I am related by consanguine ties. They or their counterparts exist somewhere on the earth, I believe, and the real business of my life is to find them.

"One's own people! Think of what it would be to dwell among them, where sympathy met one in every glance, and love made itself felt in every tone of the voice.

"I was fond of study, was quick to learn, and when only seventeen was so far advanced that I felt ready to begin life on my own account. Like the others, I was restless to leave a home which had never been more than a shelter to me. I had no dreams of marrying, and walking in the same treadmill in which so many millions of women have worn out their souls as well as their bodies. I could never see why all women should spend their lives in cooking and nursing children any more than why all men should till the soil, which was civilized man's primal occupation. I saw, too, very clearly, that women could never be more than half-fledged mentally, or have any

real influence in the world of affairs so long as they were dependents financially. They must achieve pecuniary independence before they could hope for wider orbits, as it were. To get an opportunity to carve my own way in life was my unceasing wish. So unceasing and earnest was it that it created its own fulfilment. You may put it down as a great truth, that a desire held with earnestness, faith and persistence, will bring to the one who holds it its object. 'Ask and ye shall receive' is a law that is operative everywhere.

"I held myself ready to do whatever I could find that needed doing, but always in the day-dreams of my future I saw myself a successful painter and author, because hundreds of beautiful pictures danced before my mind and begged to be put on canvas, and thousands of thoughts and fancies flitted through my brain that I longed to share with all who would hear me.

"I had a gift for drawing, but had advanced as far as I could go without better instructors than were attainable where I lived. One thing, however, I had, which was a blessing to my artistic sense and a solace to my spirit. That was a beautiful landscape to look upon. As the mental atmosphere of home was always inharmonious I lived outdoors as much as possible, and from the fine view the location commanded I extracted much profound pleasure.

“One day I saw an advertisement in a newspaper to the effect that a lithographer in a little city fifty miles away wanted an assistant whom he could train to suit his needs. The next day found me face to face with the advertiser, talking myself up unblushingly. He was surprised, of course, that a girl whose frocks as yet came no lower than her ankles, should want to learn an art presumably sacred to men; but after some hesitation he engaged me, and I found myself launched in life as an independent, self-supporting factor. It was a proud day for me, I assure you. To the hardships of the situation I never gave a thought. The chance to work was the wedge that was to split up the tree of my future, so I set myself to hammering upon it with might and main. My pecuniary recompense was microscopical, but even that gave me no distress. Such as it was I managed to live within it, and look forward to something better.

“The lithographer’s establishment proved to be very interesting to me. Some excellent work was done there, and some odd jobs of various kinds—even the engraving of spoons sometimes—all of which I learned to do. In fact I learned to do anything and everything there as well as anybody, and before long received a larger salary, though never anything very imposing. I considered the time well spent, however, for I was perfecting myself in drawing, and when out of office

studied languages and read much. I was happy—happier than I had ever been in my life, for I was out of the wretchedness that prevailed at home, and was treated with politeness and respect by everybody.

“Among the patrons of our establishment with whom I came in contact was Mr. Doring. He made no particular impression on me, until an epidemic came and his three children fell victims to it and died. Then as I heard considerable talk about his sorrow in the office, I tried to express my sympathy when next I saw him.

“Nearly a year passed when the community was startled by the announcement that his wife had died suddenly and suspiciously, and he had been arrested as her murderer. As in all such cases, some considered the accusation preposterous, and others believed in it with vindictive energy, and clamored for his punishment. I was indignant at their gross cruelty and expressed my opinion freely—too freely, I was told. He was tried and acquitted, but his acquittal did not set him right in the eyes of many of his townspeople. They talked over the circumstances, magnifying all the suspicious indications and inventing new ones, and they treated him to cuts, contemptuous looks and other expressions of malevolence, until they almost broke him down. You know there are human beings who bitterly resent it when a sensation doesn't develop into the last phase of

the horrible, and of such that town was largely composed.

“A few days after his acquittal Doring came into our office and thanked me warmly for my kind expressions of faith in his innocence, of which it seems he had been told. He looked haggard and ill, and at sight of him I felt renewed indignation at the cruelty of man to man, and I said so as earnestly as I could.

“About that time I began to notice something queer in the faces of people when they talked about Doring to me. I could not read it clearly, but that it was inimical to me I soon discovered. It was something they pretended to conceal, yet really wanted to make conspicuously noticeable. It was a suspicion of a low order, but what? The man was nothing to me more than any other victim of injustice. What had I to do with him and his sorrowful affairs?

“I am intuitive and sensitive. As soon as I began to notice this unspoken suspicion, I began to look guilty. My face flamed red at the mention of his name or any allusion to the case. You can understand that, but minds of a lower grade could not. They construed it as a sign of guilt, yet it was but the knowledge of their offensive thoughts that embarrassed and unsettled me. To know that I was suspected made me look confused and guilty. It was always so even when I was a child at school. If a culprit were sought, I

looked like one. You know, however, that most people are mere surface readers of others, and nothing in the world is so little understood as a delicate, sensitive, high spirit. I who was far removed in thought from that of which I was suspected, crimsoned with horror when I encountered this base suspicion in the faces of those who harbored it, and it made me self-conscious and shy when I spoke with Doring himself. In short, it ate into me and destroyed my peace.

“In a little while the air grew black with it. All pretence of concealment was abandoned, and significant looks blossomed into speech. They said Doring and I were infatuated with each other, and that he had killed his wife in order to be able to marry me, and that I had put him up to it. The vilest and falsest tales were circulated about us. The miserable local newspapers printed thinly-veiled insinuations, and fool friends came and poured abhorrent stories into my ears.

“The brutal malevolence of their lies amazed as well as horrified me. I could not see what I had done to bring such an avalanche of malice upon me. You may imagine what I suffered. Alone, and with a heart that had in it originally nothing but good will for everybody, this cruel experience almost withered me for life.

“I longed to leave the accursed place which now seemed peopled with devils. Driven almost

to desperation, at last I went forth to find a spot untainted by the hatred that there had destroyed my peace. I came here to Gougal's great engraving house, and with nothing in the way of help or influence from anybody, asked for employment and got it.—'Ask and ye shall receive' being a true law. Here I have been ever since, almost happy—at least not miserable.

"But this is not all my story. The difficult part is to come. A few days before I left Mr. Doring came into the office where I was at work and told me that he loved me. I was surprised and startled, and yet I listened gladly, and the story sounded sweet to me. It seemed to me that I had always loved him, though I don't know why, for I am sure I had not thought of it before. We were both victims of unjust and malicious public opinion, so perhaps it was natural that we turned to each other for consolation, though I have often wondered since what it was that suddenly filled my mind with love for a man who, until that moment was no more to me than any other. Are the words 'I love you' so potent that they can create responsive love? In no sense is he my ideal, but the feeling that came into life when he spoke those words to me has dominated me from that hour, though I have never seen him since that day. I have wondered if he loved me before that scandal came upon him, and if, in some mysterious way, people found

it out and constructed their tales according to their light on such situations? Or whether their stories put it into his head, and if so, through what occult channels was it communicated to me? I am almost persuaded that it was brought about somehow by the accusations of the community in which we lived. Somebody put out the suggestion, it reached his mind and there sprouted, took root and grew until it was strong enough to transplant a counterpart of itself to mine, for ideas are transmissible, you know. Ah! if we but knew the mystery of mind we should know all there is to know, perhaps.

“After I came away, Doring left too. He writes me constantly, and is now urging me strongly to marry him. I believe that I love him, and the knowledge that he loves me sustains me. Merely thinking about it keeps me from being lonely. 'Tis said that love is life; that even the love of a bird or a dog will keep a human being alive. You and others have wondered why I am apparently so contented and cheerful and want no lovers, only good comrades. It is because my heart is anchored.

“And yet I shrink from marrying Doring. It would mean the stirring up of all the now stagnant pools of scandals. I am content to go on as I am, for a time at least, finding my joy in the thoughts of being loved; but he is not willing. He says he has waited long enough—that the

matter must be decided one way or the other very soon. When I think of giving him up, of putting it all out of my life and plodding on with nothing to sustain me, I feel that I can't do it. Unhappily, I am one of those miserable beings who are loyal by nature and cannot help it if they would. An affection becomes a part of me, and can't be put off without disaster to the whole structure.

"This love has absorbed me to the extent of destroying my ambition to achieve something excellent with pen or pencil. What dreams have I not woven around this central idea—dreams impossible of fulfilment, yet nearly as blissful as reality.

"In a few days Mr. Doring will be here. He has written me that he intends to come to talk over our future. So you shall see him."

One evening soon after as Westfield was returning to the house he met Miss Hill accompanied by a stranger. "It is Doring," he said, and his heart sank. Intuitive moments come to all of us, when the hidden is revealed, when souls stand naked before our eyes, stripped of the cloaks and without the props which make them fair and imposing to ordinary perception. Such a moment came to Westfield, and he saw Louis Doring with an inner sight to which everything was made plain, and as he looked his face grew

white to the lips and his eyes became fixed and glassy like those of the dead.

“God help her,” he groaned inwardly, as he passed on. “The man is a fool—a stupid, brainless, flabby character—a dull dolt with regular features and a straight figure made imposing by the tailor’s skill, and a selfish heart. Exactly the kind of beast that can dazzle women as brainless as himself. But how has he bewitched *her*? Why do I ask, when I know that the destinies of the grandest and sweetest souls, a grim and perverse fate often rules? The ‘highest suffer most,’ the ‘strongest wander farthest and most hopelessly are lost.’

“How can I bear it? It crucifies me to know that that wax-faced, tailor-made biped has been carried in her mind as a hero and worshipped. And now after years of deception he will destroy her whole life.

“I see how it came about. The scandal invented by the community suggested it to him—sowed the seeds in both their heads. We live under the influence of suggestion of one kind or another all the time. What is the force of public opinion but this on a gigantic scale? The wretch has sighed and maundered and posed before her about his sufferings until he awoke her sympathy, and he will hang on to her and will not give her up because he is attracted by the magnetism of her strength of character. And

she, deluded soul, idealizes him, endows him with splendid qualities—in short, sees in him that which is in herself. She will go straight to her destruction, and I can't save her. Until I saw him I believed the best of him; but now I *know* what is before her if she should marry him. It will be like awaking from a blissful trance—it will be just that. O my heart of light! O, my tall young pine! The tragedy of your life is more than I can bear.”

Going hastily to his room he made ready and tore away to the country for a few days. “I could not endure to see the creature again,” he said, as his train pulled out of the station.

When he returned everything was going on as usual at the house, yet nothing was the same to him, nor could it ever be again. He did not speak of Doring to Miss Hill, but she herself went back to the subject, chiding him for going away.

“I saw Mr. Doring,” he answered, curtly, “and didn't like him. You may think my opinion of him is colored by jealousy, but I am sure it is not. I hope you will never marry him.”

“Well, I have not yet decided to marry him,” she said.

“If you have not given him up entirely it will end that way at last. You are merely temporizing with the situation, and it will master you.”

"Probably," she said, wearily, and then they spoke of it no more.

Not long after, Westfield went away. When he was gone she felt a sense of desolation new in her experience. He was so good a comrade. Why had he been so foolish as to leave? Could men and women never be good comrades—only lovers, or nothing?

The days went on apparently as though there had never been a Westfield, though the other members of the household thought Miss Hill was not quite like herself, that perhaps she was fonder of Westfield than she had believed herself to be, and regretted him. Brooks was strongly inclined to this opinion, though when he talked with his wife about it he drubbed Westfield soundly. "Blast the fool," he said, "what could she do but let him go, even if she were fond of him? What woman not an idiot would think of marrying Westfield, who is simply a charming failure, a penniless, indifferent, intellectual tramp?"

In truth they were half right in their surmises. The old content had vanished. She missed the intellectual sympathy of Westfield, and Doring kept her restless with his importunings. She read his letters by the light of her own integrity, and therefore saw not the rank selfishness of the

writer, who was vain and dull, but persistent to a degree that made him formidable as a wooer. He had recourse to all the selfish arguments of little souls. He said he was so perturbed in mind that he could not get on in anything, consequently in danger of financial ruin, and hinted darkly at suicide. A crisis had come to her. Forces within and without were wrestling over her destiny. Unseen hands were pushing her. At times she determined to marry Doring at all risks, and thus settle the problem, but the decision did not bring peace, as decisions should. A sickening sense of imminent disaster followed, and she was at sea again.

Weeks rolled into months, and the chaotic misery of her mind was making her look worn and ill. A day came at last in which the genius of her fate cast the die.

"The pursuit of happiness is a constitutional privilege, even for women. At least one has the right to choose the particular form of misery one prefers. Now Fate," she said, "I am tired. Take you the reins and guide. What I am to meet, I must meet, and no shrinking or hesitating will avail against the inevitable."

And so she too, went away, never to return.

CHAPTER V.

THE END OF THE DREAM.

“O shaven priest that pratest of souls,
Knowest thou not that men are moles
That blindly grope and burrow?
The field that is grey shall be green again;
But whether with grass or whether with grain,
He knoweth who turns the furrow.”

MISS CARTICE HILL had been Mrs. Louis Doring six months,—a little portion of time, yet long enough to destroy all her illusions, and arouse her from her trance. The man she had idealized and loved for four years was a different person from him who was now her husband. Day by day the awakening had been going on, until his character stood revealed before her in repellent nudity, with all its pitiable defects unconcealed, and the worst of it was that he was not ashamed. A brilliant rascal usually has some qualities that command respect, however abominable his knavish ones, but Doring's defects were the contemptible frailties of a fool. His wife had expected intellectual companionship, but she found his even-featured face a mask over dull nothingness, a shield for the emptiness of his mind. When the full force of this discovery came upon her it covered her with humiliation

and destroyed her self-confidence and self-respect, nor did these qualities ever return to her in their former strength in all the future years. To have made so fatal a blunder shook her faith in her own wisdom forever. How was it that she had been blind and now saw? Who had woven the spell which had glorified its object from afar? She had been her own enchanter, though she knew it not. In him she had seen only that which was within herself, until forced to see him as he really was.

Two days after their marriage her husband said to her, "Cartice, do you have any money?"

"Yes," she answered, pleasantly.

"How much?"

"I don't know. See," and she handed him her purse.

He took it and counted fifty dollars. "Is that all?" he asked, in a disappointed voice. "As you had only yourself to support you should have saved money."

"I did save some," she said, turning pale.

"Where is it?"

She told him.

"I guess we shall have to use it right now," he said. "Some business ventures of mine have not begun to pay yet, so it's a good thing we have this ready money."

From time to time she checked out the little capital that represented years of self-denial, until

it was all gone. In the meantime she learned that the "business ventures" were airy nothings, having no existence outside of empty words. What he had done in the past four years she never knew, as he had nothing to show for the time, not a foothold anywhere.

They floated about until her money was gone, without definite aim and without effort on his part to change conditions. To her it seemed a steady journey to destruction.

Their marriage had revived the story of his trial for murder, and other dark stories were added thereto and published in vile newspapers throughout the country. Some of these came to Cartice's hands by accident, and some by the foul designs of wretches who find pleasure in giving pain. In these infamous columns she saw herself described as a bold and scheming adventuress, who had obtained an unholy influence over a hitherto blameless man, inciting him to murder and ruining him financially as well as morally.

"I have heard newspapers called civilizers," she said, "but such as these should be called heart-breakers."

That experience did break her heart, since we have no other name for the loss of all joy in living. It wrought a pitiful change in her. Her bright mobile face became set, rigid and unreadable. "Oh, but to hide from the eyes of men"

is ever the cry of the proud spirit when suffering. When this cannot be done, it makes for itself a mask behind which its wounded pride and aching heart take shelter. The mask which Cartice Doring then put on was so impenetrable that it repelled any meddling with or probing into what lay beneath. It was her shield against that most merciless of all weapons, the human eye, and she wore it for many and many a day and could not cast it off.

Every heart, however self-sufficient its outward bearing, craves sympathy, that precious and potent power which holds the universe together, yet so little faith have we in the compassion of our fellows that nothing in hours of anguish is so dreaded as their gaze.

Cartice's family discarded her. Being loveless by nature and worshippers of the Monster God, Self, they saw her position only in the light that affected them, by the unpleasant notoriety she had attained, and showed no consideration for the poor victim of malice.

With all this came the humiliation of dire poverty. Her money was all spent, and they could no longer pay for the food and shelter they were receiving in a dingy little hotel in a second-class city. For a time she was kept from sinking under the avalanche of miseries that fell upon her by an illusion to which she held with the clutch of desperation. That was her faith in

Doring's love. Feeble of intellect and contemptible of character as she now knew him to be, she still loved him and believed that he loved her, not knowing that the power to love is in proportion to intellectual capacity and moral development, that a weak nature is as wavering in its affections as in other things, an easy prey to every fulsome word and smile from new sirens.

A woman in the hotel made the art of flattering men a business and had had many years practice in it. By way of recompense for what external charms Time had taken from her, it had given her considerable skill in her art, a skill she seldom used without effect. Her method of erotic archery was of a coarse and common order, but as her victims dropped readily enough, when she twanged her bow, there was no need to resort to subtler ones. It was her opinion that fine work in her specialty was thrown away upon men, one and all; that nothing was too gross for their vanity to feed upon, and her experiences bore out her theories. Doring's symmetrical face and figure caught her fancy, and she leveled her trusty crossbow at him, and brought him down with the first arrow, an albatross to be proud of, she thought. Her work went merrily on, and the unsuspecting Cartice saw none of it. More experienced eyes did, however. All the rest of the women in the house were aware of it, and some of the bolder ones

undertook the delicate work of opening Mrs. Doring's eyes. While they veiled their good intentions in indirect phraseology she would not see it, and when they came down to plain speech she resented it as a thing absurd and impossible. They went away with ruffled feathers, but predicting a day of doom for her in the near future, when something would happen that would make her see. They were true prophets, for the day was at hand.

As she was passing through the hall in the twilight she came upon two figures clasped in each other's arms under the broad stairway. They were her husband and Mrs. Parker, the distinguished archer. Without a word Cartice walked away from them.

In a few minutes Doring entered her room with the tittering, airy manner of one who pretends to find himself in a highly humorous situation.

"Well, Heart's Ease, you caught me flirting a bit, didn't you?" he gurgled, making a stagy effort to be facetious.

"Is that flirting?" she asked, in the most composed and polite voice.

"Why, yes, of course. What else could it be?"

"I acknowledge that I am so untaught in matters of that kind that I do not know the correct names to apply to them," she said. "What

would you call it had I been in Mrs. Parker's place, some other man in yours, and you in mine?"

"Nonsense, child; that is not to be thought of."

"Yes, it is," she said, determinedly. "My idea of marriage, as I have repeatedly told you, is perfect equality in all things, neither owning nor dominating the other. I give the fidelity of the heart and expect the same from you. The mere outward appearance of loyalty, which some wives enforce with a club would be of no value to me. But the conduct reveals the state of the heart. Were I found in the arms of a man, receiving and answering his kisses, it would be because I loved him intensely, devotedly; and I will not judge you by a lower standard than I wish to be judged. Marriage must mean marriage in the highest and truest sense of the word, or nothing. Now that I know you do not love me, I shall not blame you, for love is not a matter of the will. You shall go free."

"Hang it all, Cartice," said Doring, now thoroughly frightened, "you are not going to be melodramatic about a bit of fooling like that, are you?"

"A bit of fooling?" she echoed, unable to understand him.

"Yes. What else do you suppose it could be?"

"I can only suppose that you love Mrs. Parker. Otherwise how could you have had her in your arms kissing her?"

"Love her? What rubbish. As if a man dreamed of loving every woman he—he found it expedient to kiss."

She looked at him too amazed to speak. This was a revelation of man nature that was overwhelming. She was unaware until then of the light value many men set upon constancy and even decency in themselves, though all prate loud about them as jewels necessary to the adornment of woman's character. She was a genuine Galatea, in some respects, expecting to meet gods and shocked to find the world peopled with men and women of very crude minds. She was engaged in the difficult and pathetic task of trying to idealize the actual.

"Why should a man kiss a woman he does not love?" she asked at last.

"Why?" echoed Doring, beginning to think he could flounder out of his dilemma by a little bold bluster. "It's a habit most of us have got into, I guess. In this case I made up to the old flirt because she so manifestly wanted me to. That was all. I meant nothing by it but to gratify her vanity, which is on short rations just now, I fancy."

This coarse speech made his wife shiver with shame. The man was surely leaving her noth-

ing to respect in himself. As she was silent he thought he was gaining ground and went on:

“The idea of your being jealous of her! Why, she is old enough to be your mother.”

Meantime Cartice had rung for a hall boy, who presently tapped at the door. Stepping outside she sent him to ask Mrs. Parker to have the kindness to come and make her a visit.

The archer promptly fluttered in, all smiles, believing there was only plain sailing ahead.

“Do you love my husband, Mrs. Parker?” Cartice asked.

“Why, what do you mean?” snapped the enraged siren.

“I must suppose you love him, because I saw you and him kissing each other. I could not kiss a man I did not love, and I suppose it must be the same with you and all other self-respecting women. I have been telling him that if you and he love each other, I will not stand in your way. I want to tell you the same.”

Mrs. Parker was unaccustomed to this kind of a situation. She was only skilled in slyness, not in open combat. Embarrassed, she turned to Doring, who stood convicted and shrinking, unable to defend himself or her.

“Mr. Doring,” she said—her voice was dry and nervous—“you should have explained to your wife that we saw her coming and made a foolish attempt to tease her.”

"He explains it differently," said Cartice, quietly. "He says you seemed to expect some demonstration of affection from him, and he 'made up to you,' as he calls it, because not to do so would be to disappoint and mortify you."

Then Parker turned to Doring swelling with rage and chagrin, fire and flame darting from her eyes, and then, without a word flounced out of the room, and early the next day left the hotel.

Doring, a victim of the cowardice for which his sex is noted when entrapped, began to breathe freer. He sent a snort of derision after the retreating charmer. "There, the sentimental old lady will not trouble us again, I fancy," he said, with the air of one who sees the end of a disagreeable affair.

"That may be," said his wife, sadly, "but it cannot put us back in our old places."

"What do you mean?"

"Is it necessary to explain what is so clear? This affair has changed my attitude toward you entirely. It has killed my confidence in your honesty, and revealed your character to me in a new light. I can never be the same to you as before."

Thoroughly frightened he began to cast about for bigger straws to catch at. His wife took on new value in his eyes. An hour or so before he had commiserated himself for being tied to her, and had wondered why a being so superior as he

had ever been attracted to one so ordinary as she. Now he wanted to keep her at all costs. He was one to whom blessings brightened astonishingly as they took their flight.

"You don't mean to say you would leave me for a trifle like that, Cartice? It would be ridiculous. Everybody would laugh at you. Why, that little episode is nothing. You should know some of the really reprehensible things married men do and think nothing of it. Men don't bother much about loyalty and the finer moralities, I assure you. They're good enough for women, but men can't walk that kind of a line, you know. Your ideas are too depressingly antique for the age you live in."

"What men do and what other women accept cannot change my idea of what constitutes marriage. I will not be a party to a contract kept only by one of the two interested. I have seen women whose husbands violated every canon of decency going on patiently, under the delusion that they were doing a virtuous thing. To my mind they were encouraging vice. Kisses represent feelings. One kisses because one loves. I could not kiss a man I did not love because it would be repulsive. One is loyal, not because of a sense of duty, but because one loves; or disloyal because one has ceased to love."

"Anyway, Cartice, don't leave me or talk about leaving me. You are all I have in the

world. Forgive me, and love me if you can. I feel mean enough without your contempt." As he said this, Doring flung himself on the floor clasping her in his arms and began to weep.

"He does not understand; he never will understand—he cannot. He thinks it is something to be forgiven and then to go on as before," she said, mentally.

Anyhow she went on, but not as before. In that hour her love for her husband had changed its form and face. It had become maternal. All hope that they could make the journey of life as companions on an equal footing was dead.

No more painful experience can come to a proud woman than that of seeing that the man she has idealized must be propped up instead of leaned against.

The days went relentlessly on for Cartice Doring, as days have a way of doing for everybody. One trouble had grown to proportions so huge that his hateful shape blotted out all the rest, and his name was Poverty. The bread of dependence is bitter. Every bite to her was heavy as lead. Civilization has many tortures; but it is doubtful if it has any more cruel than this.

Every waking moment Cartice racked her brain in the effort to think of some means of earning money, and at night when she slept her dreams were full of horrors. Thoughts of the

river obtruded themselves and were driven away only to come back more determined in aspect than before.

Somewhere she had read that if every suicide would but wait twenty-four hours after determining to end life, deliverance would come. So she waited, and the worst depression would pass, and her courage come slowly back.

Meantime her husband walked the street in his helpless way seeking employment, returning at night with the story of failure written on his face.

Cartice had been used to a busy life, and the enforced idleness of those depressing days was more of a weariness to both flesh and spirit than the hardest labor would have been. In trying to escape from her own thoughts she sometimes walked long distances. One cold day she was accosted by a woman who asked her to buy some trifle she was selling.

"I wish I could, but I cannot, for I have no money," said Cartice.

"Ah, don't say that," said the other, with incredulity and disgust in her voice. "So many say it when it isn't true. It is impossible that any one so comfortably dressed as you, is without money. Compare your warm and beautiful wrap with my thin shawl."

"It is true I have a good cloak," Cartice answered, "but I am probably poorer than you, for I cannot pay for either my shelter or my food.

Your position is superior to mine, for you are trying to earn a livelihood, while I am longing to do so and know not where to begin. And besides poverty I have other woes from which I hope you are exempt. I tell you this that hereafter you may not judge from appearances. Many whom you envy are, perhaps, more miserable than yourself."

Her old childish fancies came back to her sometimes, and she would half believe that some good fairy would suddenly comfort her and mercifully change everything. And her people—the dear, kind, fond, ever-courteous people of her very own world, unseen by all who had not sympathetic eyes, came to comfort her. The inner world in which they dwelt afforded her a refuge when the miseries of the outer one became too heavy. Perhaps it was because of much time spent there that she scarcely took on the ways and speech of this world. There was ever something unusual and not easy to understand in her presence, something that suggested another and a different world.

"O my own people, my dear people of my dreams! How far I have wandered in my search for others like you clothed in the flesh!" she said, on returning from a long walk one evening, as she looked at the dingy hotel where she was obliged to take unwelcome refuge.

Within was no soul akin to hers, not one whose

words or presence, in any sense mitigated the deep solitude and loneliness of spirit in which she lived.

With it all she was physically wretched. A climate that was ungenial, a sunless room and a daily diet of anxiety combined had made deep inroads on a physique elastic but never rugged. Overstrained nature was giving way. For weeks her body had been racked with pain. Fevers came, tarried awhile and went away to come again, and languor had taken entire possession of her.

One day the culmination came. A neighbor passing her open door saw Cartice lying helpless on the floor where she had fallen. Assistance was called and she was lifted to the bed, rigid as in death. "A congestive chill," said the doctor. Then science and humanity united their efforts to save her from death and succeeded. When her husband came back in the evening, she was lying powerless to speak and only faintly conscious of being alive.

The doctor—may it be a star of great radiance on his breast in the unseen world in which he now dwells—was attentive and kind to a point far beyond the ordinary. He had seen much of life and its inevitable suffering. Experience and a heart of exceptional goodness enabled him to read the signs of the sick soul as well as the sick body at a glance.

A few days later as he sat by her bedside, Cartice edged herself nearer, and laying one of her slender hands on his, said, "I am grateful to you, doctor, very grateful for helping me so much."

The words were commonplace enough, but there were the eyes, the wonderful eyes, with their strange power to melt the heart, gazing into his. The doctor's soul was shaken, he knew not why.

"I don't understand it," he mused as he left the house. "What was it that came out of her eyes and unnerved me in a flash, making me want to cry like a baby." At the memory of that look, in which the mask of pride fell off and the suffering spirit revealed its anguish, the tears rushed anew to his eyes.

"No, I don't understand it," he repeated, "but if I had been performing a surgical operation of the most delicate and dangerous kind, and she had looked at me that way, I am afraid I should have dropped the knife. What was that indefinable thing I saw in her eyes? What was it? If anguish can accumulate for ages and ages and then look out through a pair of eyes, it was that."

Days of convalescence came, bringing the despondency, gloom and sometimes despair that attack those who have retreated from the edge of the grave before they are quite out of sight of it.

Cartice sat by her window with the breeze blowing over her, and it seemed that a thousand years had passed since last she saw the spring. Watching the people on the street, hurrying hither and yon, she envied them their strength, their activity, aims and interests. Idle and purposeless, weary and hopeless, she sat wondering what she was to do with the rest of her life. By nature she was an outdoor child, who loved field and forest and brook and hill. The hateful brick walls that stared at her now fatigued her eyes and depressed her spirit. When funeral processions went by she wondered what mystery the narrow black box represented. Sable and solemn and dreadful as it all was she envied those who rode in the long black wagon of death. "At least they are out of this horror," she said. "If there be another life its conditions cannot be worse than they are here. If there be nothing on the other side of death's silence, then the problem is very simple."

This great problem at the end of life always interested her more than all those to be solved on the journey. If death be an open door to larger activities and happier conditions, then we should bear with courage whatever comes upon us here, and go smiling on, indifferent to pain and disappointment; but if all our striving and longing, sorrowing and suffering and loving reach a finality in the grave, then—no words are strong

enough and bitter enough to tell the tragic story of the cheat.

Cartice had always marveled that many could see their nearest and dearest pass into that dread silence, and yet put the thought of what it is out of their minds, and go on pursuing their foolish little pleasures exactly as though the riddle was not for them also to solve.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BUTTERFLY.

Well, may there not be butterflies
That lift with weary wings the air;
That loathe the foreign sun, which lies
On all their colors like despair;
That glitter, homesick for the form
And lost sleep of the worm?

—*S. M. B. Piatt.*

IN these trying days the neighbor who came closest in friendship and loving service, oddly enough, was the Butterfly of the house, Mrs. Layton. She and her husband had a richly furnished suite of rooms near that of the Dorings. They received many calls, went out frequently, and appeared to find life well worth living. Mrs. Layton was pretty, was always arrayed as the lilies of the field, and all male humanity bent the knee before her.

Cartice's illness had revealed the unsuspected fact that the Butterfly had a heart as well as a pair of gorgeous wings. She had been astonishingly faithful and kind in her attentions, and astonishingly efficient too, so that now, in the dull days of convalescence the two had become close friends, the formal wall between them having

fallen under the pressure of suffering and sympathy.

It was the Butterfly who had sent for the doctor when Cartice was found unconscious on the floor, helped him when he came, and kept a watchful eye on his patient afterward. Nothing makes such close friends as to help and be helped in suffering. We learn to love those to whom we do good.

Cartice had always found a strange enjoyment in looking at the Butterfly since she first saw her, she knew not why. Was she beautiful? Yes, she had beauty worthy of a higher order of being than a butterfly. That was the marvel of it, that she could be a butterfly with a classic profile and the eyes of a mystic—eyes that could see through all masks.

Now that Cartice knew her so well the strange attraction increased, though she could not determine wherein lay her remarkable power to charm. This power, however, was acknowledged on all sides, and many fell under its influence. Even on the street, women as well as men turned to look after her, though if asked the reason could not have told it. The inexplicable quality we call magnetism belonged to her to an extraordinary degree; but who can explain what that is? It attracts; it compels planets as well as persons to follow after it; but that is all we know about it.

"Mrs. Doring," said the Butterfly, one day, "you must cheer up or you will die. Worse than that, you will make yourself old long before your time. I know it isn't a polite thing to say, but you look five years older than when you came to this house."

The aching heart of the other swelled almost to bursting. The faculty of unburdening herself by friendly confidences had never been hers. Something within her stood like a grim sentinel forbidding all outlet, and though she yearned for sympathy, could not seek it nor meet it with loosened tongue when it came. The instinct of repression had been fostered by a loveless, lonely childhood and lifelong habit. Not a word could she utter now, but the eyes, with their pitiful, wordless appeal, their unbearable burden, turned to the Butterfly, and in one never-to-be-forgotten glance laid bare their owner's broken heart. Then with a moan she fell forward, and the long repressed agony burst forth in sobs.

The Butterfly's arms clasped her closely, her tears fell over her, and the words she spoke were wiser than a butterfly ever uttered before. The greatest mind could not have devised a better method of cure for the sick soul than the sympathetic instincts of this airy creature suggested. From that hour between those two no fence or wall, or barrier of any kind existed. They knew each other as we shall all be known when the

armors and masks our hypocritical social usages have forced upon us shall be laid aside with our clay garments.

"Dear Mrs. Doring," said Mrs. Layton, presently, "it is not necessary to tell me what troubles you. I know it through sympathy. You are greatly distressed for lack of money. You cannot pay your board, and you and your husband are strangers here. I dare say you never imagined it, but my husband and I are almost without a cent in the world, too. We owe this house an immense bill for board, and I am afraid it will never be paid, for every day the situation grows gloomier. It half kills me to go to the table, when I know that we are not paying for the very food we eat, and I suspect you suffer the same way for the same reason. Our outlook is as bad as yours, only we are not strangers here and you are. Yet being known has its disadvantages as well as its advantages. It is hard to be humiliated in the eyes of one's friends. So far our difficulties are not generally known, but things too bad to think of are ahead of us, I fear. You see I pretend to be sunny and happy. I sing and dance and affect to be merry all the time—for that is the best way, though I assure you my heart often weighs a ton."

"I am astonished," said Cartice. "I thought you a butterfly out and out, with no troubles at all."

"Naturally, I believe I am. I love the beauties and pleasures of life; but nobody knows what butterflies are thinking about while they are fluttering around looking so care-free and joyous. I do the butterfly act now with a fell purpose—two fell purposes in fact. I keep others from suspecting that things are going wrong, and I keep myself from dwelling on my troubles. You must learn butterfly philosophy too. You must go out and meet people and make friends, let yourself out a little and show what is in you."

"I can't, dear, for many reasons," and Cartice glanced at her well-worn gown, and thought of the hopeless condition of her wardrobe.

"Clothes, eh?" said the other, going straight to the point. "Don't worry on that score, I am handy with a needle and can help you tinker up some of your things to look quite fine. I can toss up a delicious little bonnet, too."

"But I have no heart in anything," said Cartice. "You don't know all—no; you don't know all."

"I know more than you think I do. I know precisely what it is to be pitifully disappointed in one's husband, to find that he is the opposite of what one thought him, to lose confidence in his ability, his manliness, his loyalty and his love."

"Yes, yes, that is the hardest of all," wailed

Cartice, shaken to the soul to learn that what she believed hidden was written in big letters on the outer walls of her life, as it were.

“That, too, you must throw off,” said the philosophic Butterfly. “There are few wives who haven’t had some of that kind of experience. For the most part men are abominable wretches, their whole lives made up of deceit and lies. It hurt me cruelly, cruelly when I found it out and just had to believe it in the face of not wanting to; but now, well—I have taught myself not to care very much.”

“It seems to me that a wife only ceases to care when she ceases to love, and then she ought to give her husband up entirely,” said Mrs. Doring.

“Yes, it is true; when one doesn’t care it is because one doesn’t love one’s husband any more. Of course, it would be honester, more moral and self-respecting to leave him, but we women are mostly tied up by different kinds of chains, so that no matter how wide our eyes are opened we usually go right on pretending we don’t see, and so become hypocrites, too. The whole fabric seems to be pretty much a warp and woof of lies. But I don’t puzzle much over problems as big and hard as that. I haven’t the head for it. I just edge along the easiest way I can, and leave the things I don’t understand, and couldn’t set right if I did, for others to puzzle over and fix up if they can.”

Cartice was astonished at the Butterfly's hard trials and airy method of ignoring them. We are always astonished to learn that another has had the same kind of a load to carry that we have borne, all the more if that other has carried it gaily. It is common to believe our own experiences unique.

"You are ever so much cleverer than I when it comes to things learned out of books," Mrs. Layton went on, "I have very little of what they call learning—too little entirely; but any one can see that you are well instructed. But when it comes to knowing about people as they are and not as they ought to be, I am far ahead of you, though I am only a month or two older. You are a mere baby in all that, absolutely blind to what I can see across the street; and you are such an earnest, honest, credulous soul that you are bound to have your heart broken dozens of times while you are learning what you ought to know already."

"How did you learn it all so soon?"

"By experience, the only school whose lessons we remember. I was married at seventeen and am twenty-four now. One can learn a heap of things in seven years, with so good a chance as I have had." (Here the Butterfly's mouth took on a hard and bitter curve, which told more than her word of what her sad wisdom had cost.) "That I was romantic goes without saying. I be-

lieved in the foolish love-stories I read and expected life to be like them. Were I clever like you, I would write books and tell about life as it is and not as novel writers generally pretend it is, deluding the ignorant and inexperienced. I actually believed there was such a thing as happiness, and that I could secure it in the usual way, by marrying the man I was in love with—otherwise the man who had succeeded in casting a spell over me that caused me to see him through a mist of enchantment, for that is what it means. But my fool's paradise didn't last long. I soon learned to my sorrow that a man out of a book is not at all like a man in a book. One shock after another came, until at last nothing could surprise me. After a time my husband began to drink heavily and does yet, and that is what has brought us to poverty. When he is bad drunk he is ugly and dangerous. In short, my life is hard and hateful 'way down out of sight."

"O my friend," cried Cartice, with glistening eyes, "it is a tragedy, and I thought nobody suffered as I do."

Mrs. Layton continued: "When I married I loved him, was proud of him, believed in him. Now I only pity him, and care for him only as a mother cares for a child. Could he read my thoughts his vanity, should he have any left, must suffer. Such men lose far more than we do, after all, but they are so steeped in selfishness,

so besotted in ignorance, they can't see it. And he has wretched health, as any one may see. I don't know what the end will be, and dare not think of it."

"I wish we could know what such experiences mean," said Cartice. "What is suffering for? Why must it be? We try hard to find the right road; we do the best we can; the way looks fair and smooth, and then from no fault of our own that we can see we are plunged into dark depths. I wish we knew the reason of it, the purpose of it. I wish we knew."

"It is rather strange, Mrs. Doring, that I tell you everything so frankly. I have never been so confidential with any one before. Chatterer as I appear to be I am as proud as Clara Vere de Vere, and keep my own affairs to myself; but in talking with you everything bubbles right out, yet you never ask any questions. I shouldn't mind telling you anything, even if it wasn't to my credit, I feel so much confidence in you, and somehow it helps me to tell you. I was attracted to you from the first, but you were so reserved and unapproachable that if it had not been for this illness of yours, I doubt if we ever should have become so well acquainted. You have a curious effect on me. I couldn't tell a fib to you nor to any one in your presence if I wanted to, and yet it has always been easy to me to tell little bits of lies about things that couldn't hurt

any one. I never thought there was any harm in it. But somehow I can't do it when you are near, nor even when I think of you, and I shouldn't wonder if I gave up the habit altogether. Do you remember one day before you got sick, when several of us were in the parlor and I had a new fan and the rest were admiring it?"

"Yes."

"Well, Mrs. Orton asked me how much it cost. Of course it's the worst of manners to ask the price of things, but one meets plenty of impertinent, ill-bred people as one goes along, and must be civil to them. I was about to tell her that it cost five dollars, though it only cost two, when I saw you looking at me, and quick as a flash out came the truth. You didn't know the price of it, so I wasn't afraid you would catch me in a fib; but I was ashamed not to speak the truth in your presence. Your eyes look into one, deep down inside, and expect to see everything there sweet and clean and honest, and I could not disappoint them."

"You can't be half so wicked as you represent yourself, for you have one of the sweetest faces I ever saw, and one of the most beautiful," said Mrs. Doring, with fervent admiration.

The Butterfly lilted out a significant little laugh. "Yes, I have been told that I have an innocent face; but that is a freak of nature, for

I am not innocent. I am tolerably—yes, tolerably well informed on some subjects, and I do one thing that you will consider abominable, I flirt.”

“Dear friend, do tell me exactly what it is to flirt,” Cartice asked, entreatingly. She remembered that her husband had taken refuge in that word on the occasion of the affair with Mrs. Parker.

The Butterfly looked at her pityingly. “If any other woman asked me that question,” she said, “I should be sure she was a villain of the deepest dye, and was affecting ignorance in order to pull the wool over my eyes ; but you are such a muff about such things that I can readily believe you don’t know. It isn’t very easy to explain. Words can’t describe it very well. Not mincing matters in my case it’s making a bid for the attention of men and getting it.”

“Politeness demands that ladies receive attention from gentlemen,” said the unsophisticated Mrs. Doring, innocently.

“My benighted friend, your name should be Galatea. I don’t mean mere polite attention, but particular attention, sentimental, lover-like attention, with a strong flavor of danger in it.”

Cartice began to understand. “What comes of it ?” she asked.

A shrug of Mrs. Layton’s graceful shoulders. “Nothing, often. Sometimes—well, there are

extraordinary cases, and at the beginning it's best not to think of the end."

"What do you get out of it?"

Another shrug. "Come to think of it, nothing particular, unless it be distraction."

"And those who flirt with you,—how do they come out?"

"Some of them have the bad taste to become serious, which makes it rather awkward. Then they have to be sent off for good, and perhaps they wail about bruised hearts and such like, which I don't mind. They never get a whack amiss. What I don't owe them some other woman does. I only help to even up for women in general."

"But you might grow serious, too, some time."

"I am not afraid, because I have no heart any more. It is as dead as the traditional door-nail. I can dance nearer the edge of a precipice than anybody else and keep my head."

"Some do go over, don't they?"

"Yes; poor fools with hearts who ought not to play in that kind of a game."

"It is something I know nothing whatever about, but it appears to be both perilous and unprofitable," said Cartice.

"You are quite right in your conclusion. The liquor habit is also perilous and unprofitable, yet the man addicted to it keeps right on in it. One must do something to keep from remembering

certain other things. With me it's a case of keeping my mind off misery. I got into it because in the first year of my married life my husband neglected me shamefully, spending most of his time with a mincing little woman who posed for goodness itself. For a time I broke my heart over it; all women do. Then I braced up and began to administer his own medicine to him, only not in such repugnantly large doses. We all do things it would be better not to do, because somebody else does us an injury. We get into one trouble in trying to escape from another. It's merely a matter of choice between the frying pan and the fire,—a puzzle far too deep for my light head to work on."

Nothing is accidental. We meet the people we are destined to meet, and with their help or hindrance work out our problem, be it hard or easy. The most feather-weight of mortals may prove our greatest teacher. In whose keeping we shall find the most precious treasures we know not. But it was written in the great unopened book that the Butterfly was to be help and healing to the bruised heart of Cartice Doring, and to bear a torch which should light for her the very darkest page of life.

When affairs are at their worst a change has to come. Misery itself does not stand still. It moves slowly, nevertheless it moves. The

finances of the Laytons and Dorings had reached the stage of desperation. Colonel Layton found the situation too grave to face without frequent liquefactions. The result was that he escaped facing it altogether, for he forgot it completely during the day, and at night went into a stupor too profound for landlords or other monsters to invade.

The Butterfly and Cartice thought of a means of extricating themselves at last. They decided to leave the hotel, take lodgings and eat, Bohemian fashion, when they could pay for it, and fast when they had no money.

They found furnished rooms, side by side, which they provided with some tiny traps for cooking, by selling some of the Butterfly's personal treasures. To the surprise of the others, Colonel Layton volunteered to go daily to market and bring in supplies for both families, a task he performed for some time with a faithfulness not natural to his character, which was uncertain and ease-loving to the last degree. He went early and returned loaded like a porter. Among his purchases, cream cheese in liberal quantities was always a certainty. This was the bait that lured him to the market. He had a boyish fondness for it, and like a boy was willing to go out of his way to get it.

Cartice and the Butterfly rejoiced in each other more and more every day. They shared their

money and whatever else they possessed freely, and the unqualified frankness of their confidences was salvation for them. To tell a trouble to sympathetic ears is, in a measure, to throw it off. Repression kills, but expression is life. The seed that sends a plant upward from the earth expresses itself. Were conditions such that it could not do so, it would die and rot away in the darkness.

The blessed Butterfly, whose extraordinary baptismal name of Chrissalyn, fitted her so exquisitely, had a far nobler mission in the world than she herself dreamed.

Mrs. Doring continued to search for the meaning of things. She had sought happiness and found wretchedness, and in the first anguish of disappointment failed to see that she was not the only one who had had a fruitless quest. There was the Butterfly whose experience was the same, and many others, now that she thought of it. Perhaps all had more or less disappointment were their inner lives known.

Dimly she began to see that the pursuit of happiness could not be the true purpose of life, though all the world assumed that it was. Her dream of conjugal companionship had vanished altogether. There were times when she hated her husband, times when she pitied him, times when she despised him, and times when she tried to believe that she loved him,—must love him or

die. Had any soul in the universe so yearned for love as she and been from birth so stinted of it? Behind the immobile mask that hid her proud, suffering heart from other eyes, her soul cried for it. What could not she have endured, with a laugh on her face and a song on her lips, had love walked by her side? Could poverty or any other terror which civilization has nursed daunt her then? No, a thousand times no, she said.

Her own troubles diminished, however, in the presence of the heavier ones under which Chrissalyn now staggered.

Colonel Layton was going down hill distressingly fast, and nothing could be done to save him. His health was broken, his wits muddled and wandering most of the time, and the end of his resources at hand. He had let go his anchorage and was drifting to his destruction, careless of wind or tide.

Meantime the brave Butterfly smiled before the world and chatted cheerily when her friends called, though with her heart in her mouth, and her ear ever alert for her husband's wavering footsteps. When she heard the unwelcome sound, she made excuse and went outside to intercept his entrance. Usually at such times he was pathetically obedient, and sat where she placed him, in some vacant room or dark corner of the hall, till her visitors left and she

came for him. To be sure he complained and whined and swore in a rambling way without rage, yet when Chrissalyn came he went with her like a wornout child. However, he was not always so tractable. There were times when he blustered and threatened, and his eyes had a light dancing in them that made one's blood run cold.

One night Mrs. Doring could not sleep, a sense of impending danger oppressed her. Getting up and putting on a wrapper, she went to a window and looked into the street. All was still, and yet somewhere she fancied she heard mutterings. On going into the hall she saw the Laytons' door open, the lights at full flare, and, to her surprise, the colonel, fully dressed, sitting in the doorway whetting a razor, with a slow, sibilant stroke, which seemed to give him extraordinary pleasure, for he smiled in a gratified way and his eyes twinkled like stars. There was no fury in his face, but something far more dreadful—the look of a lunatic who meditates a deed he considers delightful. Sitting by the window, opposite the door, was Chrissalyn, clad only in her sleeping gown, with a face white and rigid, and a pistol held firmly in her hand.

At sight of the scene Cartice grew cold with fright; but she went close to Colonel Layton and was about to speak, when, without pausing in his razor whetting, he said, gently, "Go away, now,

Mrs. Doring, and come back a little later if you want to."

In spite of the apparently innocent words, she felt that behind them lurked some terrible intention. If she called help the arrival of others might precipitate whatever horror lurked in his mad mind.

Chrissalyn heard everything but said nothing, and her silence was eloquently ominous.

"Why should I come again if I go away?" she asked, thinking to lead his mind from the work in hand.

Shrugging his shoulders significantly, he said, "Merely to see sights," and then laughed the low satisfied laugh of one who knows and enjoys things his listener dreams not of.

"What sights?"

Another shrug. His vanity, ever strong, overcame his secretiveness, and he could not refrain from boasting of his intended exploits. "The last of Chrissalyn and me," he said, presently, with a chuckle. "I'm tired of the whole damned business of living, and shall give it up, but I shan't leave her behind me. Oh, no! She goes first."

Though chilled to the marrow at this cool statement, whose truth the scene and the hour confirmed, Cartice pretended to put no stress upon it. Hurriedly racking her brains for some pretence for her call and pretext for his services,

she said, "I'm sorry to trouble you just now, Colonel, but Louis is very sick, and I want you to go and ring up Barton's night clerk and get some whiskey for him as soon as you can. You are always so kind and obliging; I'm sure you won't mind my bothering you." He was ever the most easily flattered creature. Then, too, there was magic for him in the word whiskey.

"You'll go, won't you?" she asked, entreatingly, as he made no answer.

"Yes, yes, of course," he replied, absently holding the razor close to his eyes and looking critically at its edge, but making no move.

"You will excuse me if I beg you to make haste, please," she continued. "Poor Louis is in a wretched state."

He got up slowly, took his hat and began to waver about the room, still holding the open razor in his hand. As he moved toward Chrissalyn she raised the hand that clutched the pistol, and her eyes had a steady, determined look that said she would defend herself to the death.

"Come, Colonel," cried Cartice, apparently in good-natured haste, "I hear Louis groaning. Please go as quickly as you can." He laid the razor down and went out and down the stairs as docile as a dog.

Chrissalyn fell forward in a dead faint. When she returned to consciousness, limp and pale, and Cartice suggested taking her into her apartment,

lest the Colonel return, she smiled feebly, saying, "There is no danger. He will not be back in ten or twelve hours. You probably think this scene unusual, but its like has occurred several times before. Once I had to shoot, and the ball went through his hat. The shock of it was almost too much for me, for I thought I had killed him."

"My poor Chriss, you must leave him, and not run such risks any more. One such experience is enough to make you grey-headed."

"I stay on because I can do no other thing, and if I could I should stay to take care of him, poor, helpless, wandering soul that he is. He will come home to-morrow weak as a baby, go to bed and lie there helpless for weeks."

She was a true prophet. At midnight of the next day he crept wearily up the stairs, a feeble, disheveled, miserable figure, with a pale, peaked face, and faded, watery eyes. Taking refuge in bed, he arose no more for over a month.

These days of terror and anxiety were telling seriously on the Butterfly, ever a fragile being, who hung to earth seemingly by the most delicate thread. The pity of it was that she loved life so. Even as it had disclosed itself to her, full of disappointment, of tragedy, heartache and humiliation, with want menacing her daily and trouble elbowing her at every step, still she loved it. Her ideal was not particularly exalted.

Given pretty clothes and surroundings, a few pleasant friends, a modest retinue of moths to circle round her and a few gold pieces to jingle in her purse, and she could squeeze joy out of life still. But remember she was a butterfly.

CHAPTER VII.

OPPORTUNITY.

“A new friend is a new fortune.”

You have sometimes known happiness, eh? Yes, the happiness of others.—*Aresene Houssaye.*

ONE Sunday morning Mrs. Doring sat at a window, making a sketch of a figure she saw on the opposite side of the street, when Chrissalyn, who had entered by the open door, went near and looked over her shoulder with the familiarity of close friendship.

“Why, how wonderful!” she exclaimed, the most flattering admiration in her voice and face. “That’s Gabriel Norris, the street preacher, a local celebrity. You’ve done him to perfection—even better than he looks himself—that is, I see something in his expression here that I never saw in him, and yet I believe he has it after all. The picture brings it out strong. I can’t tell just what it is, but it makes me want to cry.”

The eyes of the sketcher glowed with an indescribable light—the light which the intangible, potent, holy thing we call appreciation calls from the depths of human souls. To portray nature so that the most heedless and untaught see the soul of

the subject and are able for the moment to roam about in that awesome country,—with the artist, and feel his heart-throbs—is ever the dream of art. By the effect of her work on the Butterfly, Cartice realized that in this modest drawing she had accomplished this.

“There, he is moving on and the boys he has been talking to are going with him,” said Chrissalyn, leaning out of the window. “He preaches every Sunday morning at the South Market, and is probably on his way there now. He is a queer fellow, though he belongs to a rich and respectable family who are greatly mortified at his peculiar doings. But he hasn’t lived with them for ten years, nor taken a cent from them. He has a little cobbler’s shop away down town in the very ugliest part of the city, and supports himself making and mending shoes, and does excellent work, they say. On Sundays, and other odd times he preaches to people who are too poor to go to church, and does lots of other things for them besides. You see he is cheaply dressed, though as clean as a pin. He could have better clothes, but doesn’t want them—has views about such things—says he does not want to be separated from the people he tries to help by being better dressed than they are. Of course he is an out-and-out crank, but wasn’t always so. A dozen years ago nobody was fonder of the good things of the world. He was the leader of the very swellest

social doings. All at once he took a turn in the opposite direction—said he had been wasting his life, and was going to put what remained of it to some use. Some say an unlucky love affair set him off; others that he had a dream or vision that changed him. At this very moment I dare say his father and family are rolling to church—the swellest church here—in their fine carriage. But Gabriel preaches against the rich—or at least against the selfish use they make of their money, and prophesies no end of difficulty for them here and hereafter if they keep on as they are going. I have always laughed at him, but I never shall again, because your picture of him gives me a queer thrill and lets me see into him as I never did before. But how did you get the features, the expression,—everything so perfect, seeing him only from the window?”

“I saw him a few days ago, with his head bare, just as I have him here, preaching to a little group on a street corner,” said Cartice. “I stopped a moment to listen, and his face has been often in my mind since. So when I saw him from the window, this morning, talking to the boys, I hurried to make a sketch of him.”

Then looking up, with an eager light in her mottled eyes, she said, “Chrissalyn, let us go and hear him. You say he speaks to the poor. We are of them. Who needs help more? Let us go.”

The Butterfly gave but a grudging consent. She was the natural enemy of all serious instruction. As they went she babbled on about Gabriel Norris :

“As he was bent on preaching, his father wanted him to go to a theological college and be shaped up into a first-class regulation preacher, wear the correct thing in clothes, have a fashionable church, gilt-edged Bible, velvet pulpit cushions, fat salary and everything that goes to make preaching respectable ; but Gabriel wouldn't have it that way. He said there was more than enough of that kind of thing ; that what he wanted to say to people had nothing in common with theological factories, and as for pulpit cushions and the like they were abominations in the sight of the Lord ; that Jesus had none of them, nor would he have.”

The scene at the market-house was one to take hold upon the heart. The people who sat there on rude benches were all from the bitter land of indigence. Its hard conditions were written in their faces, their poor garments, stooping shoulders, weary and awkward attitudes. Many women were there, for women are ever found where a word of promise and hope is to be spoken, and that fact is eloquent of what they suffer, of the bitterness of their disappointments, of the weight of their sorrows, of the hunger of their hearts and the yearning of their spirits. .

Before the preacher had spoken ten minutes Cartice was under the spell of his oratory, which was simple, strong and sympathetic. It wasn't preaching. It was the life-giving, hope-inspiring talk of a loving friend, and it went to the hearts of his hearers and there awoke nobler aspirations. He said nothing of seeing evil in them. Instead, he told them how good they were—much better and higher than they themselves had dreamed; that possibilities of wonderful and beautiful growth were in every one of them; that they had an eternity in which to grow, and on themselves depended their well-being now and forever.

It was good to see the light of self-respect come into their dull eyes under the potent spell of the young preacher's earnest words. Some of them had shrunk internally to almost nothing, under the blight of the self-depreciation which close intimacy with grinding poverty begets. Now their souls began to gather confidence and stand erect, conscious of their own value.

"My dear ones," he said, "don't make the blunder of thinking that the aim of life is to be happy. Do not spend your time hunting happiness, seeking it where it never was and never will be—in the external things of life, in possessions that pass even while you use them, in pleasures that leave a bitter taste in the mouth and a regret in the heart. I doubt not that our Divine Father intended us to be happy, but not in

the way we imagine. His way is so very clear and simple, and yet we are so blind we see it not, and wander in such hard paths, and lose ourselves often. It is to love each other. Ever so brief a trial of this way proves it the true one. But to love each other does not mean to love only your own families, your friends and those who treat you well. It means to love everybody, even your enemy. When you love your enemy, a miracle happens. He ceases to be your enemy. Love always and to the end.

“When we love as we should we do not question whether we are happy or not. Then another miracle happens. We are happy, for we taste the highest order of happiness, that of forgiving and loving our enemies, of giving out good will and kindness to all, of making others happy. The less we think of our own happiness the happier we shall be.

“Did any man or woman whose life has helped the world go about complaining because he or she was not happy? Serve others, thinking not of yourselves and, without knowing the hour of the great transformation, you will find you are already a dweller within the kingdom of heaven.

“Love, and judge not—that is, don’t find fault. When you learn to love, you will not wish to judge; you will not see the faults; you will see only the good in everybody.”

The Butterfly would have found the experi-

ence dull, but that on the edge of the assemblage she spied a handsome male acquaintance. This enabled her to await the end of the lecture with heroic patience. Her face wore an expression indicative of complete indifference to his presence, for that was part of her method of attracting moths, though in fact she saw nothing and thought of nothing but him. It goes without saying that as soon as Gabriel Norris had dismissed his people, this imposing moth was by her side. She greeted him with demure civility, as though he was the most ordinary apparition that could loom up—for that, too, was in her tactics—then presented him to Cartice as Mr. Prescott.

He had a reverent way with women, unstudied and natural, which usually won their good will and sometimes more at the first meeting. He took her hand with old-fashioned friendliness, and as he looked into her face, and her eyes met his, the mask of self-repression she had been wearing slipped aside for a moment, and her sore and suffering spirit stood in mute appeal before him, and he saw and understood.

“Show Mr. Prescott your sketch, Mrs. Doring, please,” said the Butterfly. Without demur Cartice opened her sketch book which she had brought to give the finishing touches to Gabriel’s picture. Prescott started in surprise when he saw it. After a moment or so of silence, he said, “It is admirable.”

Mrs. Doring's face glowed. A word of praise with the genuine ring in it warmed her heart to the core.

"You draw well, too, Mrs. Layton," he said, with a significant smile; "but not in the same way."

The Butterfly disdained to reply. Turning to Cartice, with the most winning deference, he said, "I should like to purchase your sketch, when completed, Mrs. Doring. I want to publish it. Write me a description of the services here this morning, to go with it, will you not? You *can* write, I know without asking." (Mentally—If she would write what her eyes tell it would move the world.)

"Mr. Prescott is the editor of the *Register*," said the Butterfly, by way of explanation.

"I shall be delighted to do so," Cartice answered, with swelling heart.

"And do some more of the same kind of work afterward. I want things like that—plenty of them," he said.

As they talked together Gabriel Norris joined them, for he and the newspaper man were old friends. Cartice thanked him earnestly for his helpful words, saying frankly that she needed them as much as any of his hearers. Accustomed to the indifference and contempt of that part of the public which should have understood him, and to the stupidity of that which could not,

he had long used himself to live without praise ; but he was human, and his heart was lighter and warmer for a word of appreciation.

Cartice walked home on air. The long lane of her misery was turning. A chance to work had come to her, and that meant a means of climbing out of the slough of despond. Idleness is the prelude to decay, an invitation to destruction. Enforced idleness, when the spirit longs for activity, and yet finds itself hedged in, helpless, cut off from opportunity, is the death of hope, the very day of doom for the soul. Now that was all over. The ladder that leads out of despondency and on to the best the world has to give was before her, her feet already on its first round.

She could hardly wait to get home and write the description that was to accompany the drawing. It took shape as she went, one sentence chasing another in her mind, all eager for expression, which is but another word for life.

The Butterfly had a new theme to chatter about—Prescott and his doings, though her companion scarcely heard her, so deep was she in her new dreamland of action.

“Prescott is a genius, they all say, though a capital fellow, nevertheless. Nobody can back him down, for he fears neither man nor devil, and I like that. He is divorced from his wife who was considerable of a fiend, I guess, and no

doubt he is too, on occasions. She married again. It was lucky we went to hear Gabriel. One never knows where one may encounter a streak of good fortune,—even at so unexpected a place as church sometimes.”

Though but few words had been exchanged the famished spirit of Cartice Doring had been refreshed by meeting Prescott and Gabriel Norris. Words are but a cumbrous means of communion anyway. When we better understand the laws of our being we shall need them less. Our thought goes forth and becomes a part of others, by a subtler method than articulate speech; and this is why no man can live unto himself, and why if one be lifted up he lifts up others also.

The turning point in ill fortune had come, sure enough. The very next day Doring announced that he had “dropped into something.” It was not a chance to make a fortune, but it was—well, just what he said—something.

Is it not true that there are persons who bring us good luck from the very moment they cross our paths, and others who dower us with ill-fortune as long as we are associated with them? Mascots and Jonahs are realities, not myths. Meeting Gordon Prescott and Gabriel Norris had turned the tide for Mrs. Doring. One had opened the gate of opportunity, and the other had given her a kind of help not easy to label. It might be

described by saying that she felt better for having met him.

Her sketch of him, with an accompanying word picture of the scene at the market-house went promptly to the *Register*, and was responded to in person by Prescott, who brought her a crisp five dollar note, said an appreciative word or two in his curt, laconic way, and repeated the order for more.

The joy of expression took hold of her, and to her great amazement her pen could more than keep pace with her pencil. Its creations were distinguished by an originality, a strength and grace that at once attracted attention. To her the pleasure she found in writing was not in the admiration it excited, but in the doing of it,—in the never-ceasing surprise that she could do it so well. Sometimes when she read her own productions after the fire that created them had died out, they seemed new and strange to her, like the work of another. An apparently inexhaustible well within herself had been opened, into which she could reach at will and draw forth sparkling draughts. In this way she became aware of the complexity, temerity and unfathomableness of that wondrous, unseen, indescribable thing we call mind, which has everlastingly within it all that is, was or shall be.

It astonished her to see the facility with which her pen danced humorous jigs, flung off diamonds

of wit, and set in motion rippling waves of laughter. It was strange that she who was but emerging from the valley of despair, and whose life so far had had in it but little of the glitter of pleasure, could write as one who knew the light, the joyous, the mirthful, the happy side of existence.

Yet even in her most jaunty and jubilant products, here and there would be a bold, strong stroke of another kind, which made the reader know that he was following no light soul. In all she wrote, whether grave or gay, were the "fresh eyes," to which we give the name of originality, and another quality, for which we have no name, which moves us, we know not why.

When it began to be rumored that the *Register's* new writer was a woman, the smart people, who knew everything, shook their heads and sniffed incredulously, saying that there was too much force in the work; that the style was not womanish—it was Prescott in disguise. They expected the apron-strings to flutter conspicuously from every page prepared by a feminine hand. For them genius has sex and that sex is always male.

It must not be understood that these early efforts of my heroine were worthy a place among the works of genius. They were only fresh, spirited, striking sketches of life as their author saw it, and they went into the great ocean of

newspaper literature here, there and all about, that lives but for a day. Some of them, it is true, found a pathetic scrap-book immortality. Others were picked up by mightier periodicals than the *Register*, and given a flatteringly wide circulation, and a few met the dreary fate of getting into imposingly bound collections of "Literary Gems," there to rest in undisturbed security on village parlor tables for many a year to come.

In a few weeks Mrs. Doring had the felicity to be installed as associate editor of the *Register*. Her salary was not munificent, as salaries usually are in fiction. Let no one imagine that all aspirants get an opportunity to do newspaper work and ascend the ladder as easily. Her good luck in this particular could be traced to her fitness for the position. Prescott soon discovered that besides having extraordinary ability and originality as a writer, she had what he called the "editorial instinct," which, being interpreted, meant that she knew instinctively what an attractive newspaper should contain.

In novels it is always easy to get to the top. In that respect the people who live in books have a much better time than they who live outside of them. There young heroes make dazzling flights up the journalistic mountains. A young man comes out of college, writes something for a powerful daily newspaper, whose editor at once begs him to accept a lucrative situation thereon.

He allows himself to be persuaded, after some hesitation, and takes advantage of the opportunity for distinction thrust upon him, after which he goes up without delay or hindrance, till he becomes editor-in-chief, owns the paper and is a recognized power in the land. But in real life, alas! the get-there road is a harder one to travel.

Another thing in real life is managed less excellently than in fiction. The women who do newspaper work, too frequently have a little place fenced off to operate in. This is called "Woman's Corner," or "Woman's Work," or "Woman's World," and therein the entire female part of the population is supposed to find satisfactory news aliment. There the whole mass of reading women are expected to pasture in peace and plenty. And why not? There they can find out just how long a sponge cake should be left in the oven, what is the best lotion for the complexion, how to polish their finger nails, the latest thing in embroidery stitches, the newest style in visiting cards, the most approved method of conducting an afternoon tea, and no end of valuable and ennobling information in regard to what "they" are wearing.

Beside all this indispensable instruction the corner is sure to contain many proud allusions to that terrible scourge, the "true woman," who is always found sitting serenely within her "sphere," her feet on a hassock, her embroidery

in hand, ignorance in her head, selfishness in her heart, vanity and jealousy written all over her feeble face, saying that she "has rights enough," just as she would say she has bread enough. But evolution, that "slow performance of miracles," will eventually oust even this stumbling-block in the path of human progress.

Cartice Doring was not a "true woman," nor was her work on the *Register* to be found in a "corner," neither had it a fence of any kind about it, seen or unseen, nor was it addressed to women more than to men. As she saw it, newspapers were for all and dealt with matters of interest to all humankind.

Happily Prescott thought the same. He held almost no opinions dear to the average mind, and scarcely ever put pen to paper without tearing up the ground under the feet of those who insisted upon thinking "the same thoughts their fathers did think." He had founded the *Register* and made it the vehicle of his opinions rather than a mere news journal. These opinions were invariably so new and daring, and so entertainingly expressed that his worst enemies could not deny themselves the pleasure of reading them. Hence it was that the *Register* was a flying success.

As it was well known that Prescott was as ready and able with his revolver as with his pen, his views on current events were respected, and

seldom openly disputed. He was the mortal enemy of fools and fogies, and found his chief joy in outraging that chaos of ignorance and prejudice we call public opinion. In short he was brilliant, bold, witty, kind and cruel—a tremendous engine with sand in the joints.

Mrs. Doring found her new field of activity stimulating and delightful. It had been her belief that happiness could be made of but two ingredients—companionship and congenial employment. Now that she had the latter, the want of the former troubled her less. Besides, she met many people, and the contact of sympathetic minds is to another what moisture is to vegetation—keeping it alive and invigorating it. In a day, as it were, the world had expanded, and she was in touch with its heart, vibrating in sympathy with its deep pulsations.

She learned much of human nature, particularly gifted human nature, for the *Register* had literary leanings, and many of its friends, men and women, who came to chat a vast half-hour in the informal editorial den, were toiling up the narrow way that leads to eminence and fame.

Some have achieved the fulfilment of their dreams and are now enjoying their little day of renown. Others had but a taste of the delirious cup of renown when they were called into the silence. Some grew weary and ceased to strive,

and some are still plodding on in the old road, having neither lost nor gained ground.

As a matter of course, enemies arose. The spiteful, the envious, the jealous, the bitter-hearted, the undeveloped must needs have their little fling at the woman whose pen was a power. But Cartice was too busy to heed them. Scarcely had she time to ask herself if she were happy. "Almost," she said, when she thought of it, though it was a different kind of happiness from that of her earlier dreams.

CHAPTER VIII.

DEATH'S NARROW SEA.

The child that enters life comes not with knowledge or intent ;
So those who enter death must go as little children sent.
Nothing is known, but I believe that God is overhead ;
And as life is to the living, so death is to the dead.

—*Mary Mapes Dodge.*

ONE morning Cartice met Colonel Layton in the hall, as he was about to go out for the day. His unusual appearance struck her at once. He was clean shaven and carefully dressed ; his face was pale and no signs or fumes of liquor were upon or about him. This, of itself, was enough to attract particular attention ; but there was more. An indefinable something in his manner asked for sympathy in a silent way, like an animal ; and in his eyes which of late were unusually glassy and vacant, was an expression of reminiscent sadness, such as comes to the eyes of those who in a quiet, self-questioning hour, look back upon their lives and see scenes that bring regret. Cartice felt her heart stirred by a wish to comfort him.

Perhaps he was conscious of that vibration of sympathy, for he smiled and the smile was singularly sweet and winning, revealing a glimpse

of his old-time handsome self, when he had won the Butterfly's heart.

In conversation the Colonel was ever a failure. His ability in that art did not go much beyond a few stock expletives, eked out with significant shrugs and emphatic grunts. But now he tried to make talk, and lingered as though he had something to say and knew not how to begin.

"Hang it all," he growled at last, "what is there in this life anyhow? What are we here for, I should like to know? What's the object of the whole, miserable procession? It's a devil of a grind for everybody, and we have to give it up at last, and go out of it, God only knows where. What do you think is at the end of it, Mrs. Doring?"

"O Colonel, I think and think, but I know nothing."

"Yes, that's the dickens of it, nobody knows," he sighed. "But if there is a hell most of us will be well seasoned for it by tough times here. I feel about ripe myself. At least I am certain they can't get up anything worse than this world anywhere. Mighty little happiness here."

There was something inexpressibly pathetic in this ruined man's mention of happiness. Like all others he had been in pursuit of it, yet his seeking had but led him farther astray.

"Should you like to live your life over again?" he asked with sudden animation.

"I have not the courage," she answered.

"I don't know that I have either," he said, with a weary air. "I don't know that I want to; yet all the morning I have seen myself as I was when a child in my father's house, and my grown-up life seems but a dream. If it were so, and I remembered the dream, I would not again travel the same road, I assure you. I recall one spring morning, particularly—a Sunday morning—when I sat with my mother on the shady old porch with vines running up the sides, and she sang this:

“There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign.
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain.

“There everlasting spring abides
And never-withering flowers.
Death like a narrow sea divides
That heavenly land from ours.’ ”

A good tenor voice had once been his, but the best of it had gone the irrevocable road, like many of his other endowments and possessions. Enough remained, however, to give a touching sweetness to the grand old words, and as he sang his face became softened, beautified, transfigured, all that was erring and evil dropping out of it. The years, too, fell away, and he was a little child again—nor had he ever been anything else—just a child, weak, wandering, blundering, stumbling often—just a child, brother to us all.

"Do you think there is anything for us on the other side of death?" he asked, the childlike look still upon his face.

"I hope so."

"Well, I believe there is," he said, with unwonted decision. "I have always believed so, in spite of my bad practice, though I don't know what it is; but I am not afraid though I'm no saint. It seems all right."

"Yes, whatever it is, it must be all right," Cartice answered. "It could not be anything else. But I wish we knew something about it. I wish we knew."

"It may not be long before I know. You see what I am—a shadow of what I used to be, a wreck in everything and nobody to blame but myself. I guess the end of the road can't be very far ahead. After I make the lonely journey, I'll come back and tell you something about it if I can."

"Ah, Colonel Layton, thousands, millions have started on that journey with the same promise upon their lips, but who has kept it?"

"Yes, it is a stumper," he said, reflectively, "but in spite of it I have faith that perhaps I can. Mother and father are on the other side somewhere. This morning they seem very near to me—nearer than ever before since they went away. I feel that I might meet them at any turn."

With a sigh and a smile he lifted his hat in graceful adieu and went slowly down the stairs, softly singing,

“Death like a narrow sea divides
That heavenly land from ours.”

Two hours later Cartice was sitting at her desk in the editorial office of the *Register*, when a stranger entered. Speaking low, as even the rudest do when they bring dread news, he said:

“Colonel Layton fell dead on the street a few minutes ago. He has been carried into Dr. Olcott’s office, and the doctor wants you to come at once. He knows you are a close friend of Mrs. Layton, and I guess he wants you to tell her and help make arrangements.”

Dazed and trembling, Mrs. Doring was about to start when Prescott entered, and he volunteered to accompany her.

They found everything calm and orderly. The doctor was noted for keeping an even mind under all circumstances, and had permitted no intrusion of the curious and idle. He opened the door to an inner room, and led them to a sofa on which the dead man lay awaiting the coroner. With professional coolness the doctor turned down the sheet, saying, “He was already gone when they brought him in.”

In very truth he had become a child again. The fair weak face wore a look of youth and

innocence. The light, shiny hair, scarcely ruffled from its careful arrangement of the morning, had on it baby tints of sunshine, and under the blonde moustache lurked the remnant of the childishly sweet smile that lighted his face when Mrs. Doring saw him go singing down the stairs two hours before. The placid form before her was his semblance, indeed, but it was not he. That mysterious fact Cartice realized in an instant. There were his clay garments, but all that was he was gone.

The funeral took place two days later. Mrs. Doring could not be present, for she was unable to raise her head from the pillow. Thoughts of the great mystery which had just touched elbows with her haunted her all the time. The "narrow sea that divides the heavenly land from ours," what was it like? What shore touched it on the other side? Was there a heavenly land or any land beyond that dark ocean? And where was Colonel Layton now?

No answer to these perplexing queries came. And yet, perhaps an answer always comes could we but read it. Perhaps it came to Mrs. Doring, for as she lay there wondering about it, a calm came upon her, and in imagination she saw Colonel Layton as he stood at the top of the stairs on the day they talked together about this greatest of all problems, and heard him say, "I am not afraid. It seems all right." Far down

within herself she heard the echo, "all right! all right!" and then she saw again the Colonel's childish smile, and he repeated assuringly, "Yes, it's all right."

Chrissalyn went to live with a friend and determined to find a way to earn her bread. The end of one path through which she had sought happiness was reached and only sadness and disappointment were there. Now she must look for others, for the endless quest goes on, clear to the grave itself and possibly beyond. When she with the last scrap of her possessions was gone and her apartments left solitary, Cartice felt a sense of desolation greater than she had known since she and the Butterfly had been friends. Life is as inexorable as death; its separations are often more cruel.

In the office of the *Register* the final fate of man was a subject often under discussion. Prescott snorted in derision at any mention of a continuance of life in a sphere invisible to us now. "We die and turn to dust, like the worm," he said. Cartice held to the hope of something more than we have here—a sequel to this life, or a continuation of it, but she could advance no basis for the hope which he considered tenable.

Well-known figures in the state and community passed out of sight into the silence of the grave every now and then, and it was the *Reg-*

ister's custom to speak with unvarnished frankness about their lives. Without doubt this, in many instances, added to the terrors of death, for Prescott was capable of very rough surgery in his post-mortem analysis. He flouted the old injunction, "speak no ill of the dead," saying that mere dying did not excuse a man's misdeeds, nor make an angel of him, and that they should reap an obituary harvest of whatever crop they had sown. Not even the time-honored "regular subscriber" or "constant reader," had immunity from this harsh ruling. He was willing to take the same medicine himself when his time came, and it should never be said of him that he was in the habit of plastering people all over with laudatory lies just because they had died. "O yes," he would snarl, "lots of men serve the devil all their lives, and then expect newspapers to put plenty of heaven in the truck they print about them when they die. But the *Register* isn't conducted that way. They shall get in it what they have earned, no more, no less." Truly, many found, even without dying, that it was a terrible thing to fall into the too truthful hands of the *Register's* editor.

CHAPTER IX.

THINGS NOT DREAMED OF IN EVERYDAY PHILOSOPHY.

“Communication between the spirit world and the corporeal world is in the nature of things, and has in it nothing supernatural.”

The body, after all, is only a portable, two-legged telephone through which the soul, or part of it, communicates with other souls which for purposes of education and evolution are temporarily imprisoned in these cumbrous and ingenious, but very inconvenient physical machines.—*William T. Stead.*

CHRISSALYN had the usual difficulty of the untrained in finding employment. The search was long and disheartening and might never have had a happy ending but for a curious accident, which was no doubt down in the books of destiny.

She was going up a public stairway one day, when a man descending at a break-neck gait ran against her, throwing her down. Distressed at what he feared might have a serious ending, he picked her up, bewailing his awkwardness, and offering to do anything in his power to atone for it.

She opened her eyes to consciousness just as he was saying, “What can I do for her? What can I do for her?”

“Get me a chance to earn my bread,” she gasped, with almost her first breath.

“I’ll do it at once,” he said. “I’ll take you right up the stairs into my office and install you, out of gratitude that I didn’t kill you.” So it could be said in all truth that she “fell into a good situation,” for that it proved to be. Her ignorance of the duties she was to perform was patiently borne with until it was overcome. Never was butterfly more painstaking and industrious than she, and work proved a blessing to her, as it does to everybody whose heart is in it. Occupation gave her a stronger hold on life, for self-dependence is a wonderful invigorator. It gave her added dignity, too, leaving just enough of the butterfly instinct to give her exceeding grace.

Seldom did she speak of her husband, save to Cartice, from whom she concealed nothing, for Mrs. Doring was always tolerant, helpful, receptive, kind and sympathetic, never critical and condemnatory. Others beside the Butterfly understood this, and went to her with what they needed to tell. The mind that is receptive, never meeting any honest communication with hedgehog defiance or fool’s sneer, becomes a magnet which draws knowledge from the very fountain of light and life. Into it flow the secrets of the universe as well as of individuals.

Speaking of her husband one day to Cartice, the Butterfly said, “I never shed any tears be-

cause he died. It was the only road out of misery for him and for me; but I did weep for the happiness we never had together, yet might have had."

One Sunday she came, but was silent and reflective, unlike her usual self, for a time. At last she said: "Cartice, dear, I want to tell you something that will certainly seem queer to you. I dare not speak of it to any one else, lest I be locked up as a lunatic. But you are always so kind and so sensible, you may be able to understand it. I don't. When I think of it I feel afraid that I am a little off my base."

"You can tell me anything, Chriss, you know that."

The Butterfly looked nervous and paled a little, but began:

"To-day I have been to the funeral of Jess Hanley, a schoolmate of mine. We were always the best of friends, though for some years we have seen comparatively little of each other, because she has been tied down at home so closely on account of sickness. Her husband died of consumption two years ago. A year later their little boy went. Then Jess became ill, and for months she has been expecting to go any day almost. Last week she sent for me and I went. She told me she knew her time was nearly up. She was quite cheerful over it, as she believed she would be with her husband and child again

after she had 'passed over,' as she called it. She was a spiritualist, and thought that dying isn't dying at all. One thing she made me promise—a mere sick fancy I suppose—and that was that I should not fail to go to her funeral.

"Well, I went of course. It was like most other respectable funerals. People looked solemn, there were flowers, and a preacher made the usual harrowing remarks, which set everybody weeping—everybody but me. I didn't shed a tear, yet I loved Jess as well as any one there except her mother, I am sure.

"I didn't cry because I was so dazed I couldn't. That was the queer part of it. I was dazed, because all the time the minister was speaking I saw Jess, her husband and little boy running around the coffin, laughing, kissing each other and throwing flowers in all directions. They took the flowers from the mass on top of the coffin, yet there were never any fewer there, though they threw them around by handfuls.

"Once when the preacher said, 'We shall see our sister no more until that great and dreadful day of the Lord, when all shall stand at the bar of judgment,' Jess looked at me, laughed in a knowing way and threw a rose into my lap; but when I tried to pick it up it wasn't there. Now what do you think of all that? *Am* I crazy, or what was it?"

"What do you think it was, Chrissalyn?"

"I don't know, and don't dare to think too much about it lest I get upset over it."

"Did others see them, do you think?"

"No; I am sure they did not, and that frightens me. If they were really there why didn't the others see them? If they were not there why should I see them, unless something has gone wrong in my head? I am sure the others saw nothing, for I thought of that and watched them closely and could detect no astonishment in their faces."

"How did the dead people whom you saw look, Chrissalyn?"

"Just like living people, clothes and all. Only I knew they were not living and had no business to be there, and couldn't be there, and yet they were there."

"Have you ever seen anything of the kind before?"

"Yes, several times; but I always drove the recollection of it out of my mind as soon as possible, because it seemed uncanny and creepy—and I ended by persuading myself that I had imagined it all."

"Did your friend Jess know you had seen such things?"

"Come to think of it, she did. Once a good while ago she told me about some queer things of that kind she had seen. That's the reason she was a spiritualist. Then I told her what I had

seen.” (Here the Butterfly’s face lighted up). “Now that may be the reason she made me promise to be sure and go to her funeral. Perhaps she intended to make herself visible to me if she could. At least that view of it makes me feel easier. I prefer to believe I saw ghosts rather than to think my brain is going bad. It has been a long time since I saw anything of the kind. Each time I hope will be the last. But what do you think of it, Cartice? You believe I saw those dead people, don’t you?”

“I think you saw just what you say you did; but I can’t explain it.”

Mrs. Doring had always clung to the belief that the universe held many mysteries beyond her ken; that marvelous things, hidden from common vision, were destined to some day stand revealed, and no man knew the manner in which they might make themselves known. She had had some experience with professional clairvoyants which had been disenchanting. For the most part they had been clammy, illiterate, unscrupulous, pitiful types of humanity, ready to violate truth and the English language without hesitation or remorse. Now she looked at the Butterfly with an interest that almost amounted to awe. Could it be that the gift of seeing the hidden and unknown belonged to this bright, winged being, who loved the world and the things of the world only?

At last she said: "Chrissalyn, you have heard of the faculty of clairvoyance, have you not?"

"Yes, of course."

"May it not be that you are a clairvoyant, and saw your dead friends clairvoyantly?"

The Butterfly lifted her hands in horror. "O Cartice, how can you suggest such a thing? I a clairvoyant? It would be too dreadful. I wouldn't have a hint of such a horrid thing get out on me for the world. Why, clairvoyants are hideous creatures, ugly, old, frowsy, untruthful, and advertise to tell you all sorts of things for a dollar."

"But, my own Butterfly, you are not old and ugly and all the rest of it, neither are all clairvoyants. History contains the names of some very eminent ones. What a wonderful and enviable gift clairvoyance must be. How I wish I had it. And if it be true that you are possessed of it, think what it brings to you—light, light from heaven itself—the most glorious light in the universe—proof that the dead have never died."

Her friend's enthusiasm ensnared the Butterfly's vanity at once, so that she pricked up her ears and gave heed. Whatever Cartice said had weight with her. It gratified her, in spite of her prejudices, to have a faculty unattainable to ordinary persons. All this darted through her head and settled down into acceptance.

“Well, I don’t mind if it is clairvoyance, only don’t tell anybody.”

“It’s not a thing to be talked about with those who don’t understand or respect it. It’s too precious. Would I could see such sights. Then I could sing light-hearted tunes and walk on bravely, be my pack never so heavy. Don’t fail to tell me if you see anything more.”

Chrissalyn did see something more of the same character very soon, and made haste to describe it to her friend.

She had gone to a bank to attend to some business which required more explanation than was convenient to make through the cashier’s window, so she was invited to take a seat in the office of the president, with whom she had some acquaintance.

While she sat there his son entered, bearing strong evidence of having tarried too long at the wine. His reputation as altogether too jolly a dog was well known. His father sent him off as speedily as possible, and then said to Chrissalyn in a burst of distracted confidence, such as we all give to somebody at times when the load grows too heavy, “My boy is going to ruin in spite of all I can do. I have borne with him till I am out of patience, yet my forbearance is wasted. I am tempted to cast him off entirely, to throw him on his own resources and see how that will work. Maybe it will bring him to reason, since

no amount of kind treatment does him any good."

On the instant Mrs. Layton saw a woman stand behind the banker. Whence she came or how she knew not, but there she was, and she spoke—spoke in an earnest, anxious voice, with an entreating gesture: "Tell him not to do that. Beg him not to do it. Say that *I* implore him not to do it."

Under the impulse of the request, before she had time to think what she was doing, the Butterfly told the banker what she had just seen and heard.

He was a big, commonplace, worldly man, whose head was never heated with super-mundane problems, yet he whitened as he heard this strange story.

"What was the woman like?" he asked.

"She was young and plainly dressed in a calico gown of an old-time mode, and she looked astonishingly like your son."

The face of the banker whitened more and more and his eyes became glassy and fear-struck.

"That describes my first wife, Rob's mother," he said, "yet you did not know—no one here does—that he is not the child of my present wife. I was poor while she lived, so poor that she never had anything better than calico to wear."

By that time Chrissalyn began to have a sheep-

ish feeling about what she had done, and wished she were well out of it. A force that was irresistible had impelled her to speak, but now that the tale was told, the impulsion gone and she became master of herself again, her first thought was that she had let out the secret of her ability to see things not within the range of common vision. So she attempted to make light of it, lest the banker go about telling it as a queer thing, and then the detested name of clairvoyant would be fastened on her in spite of everything.

“I dare say it’s all nonsense, and I hope you won’t think of it again,” which was as near as she could delicately come to saying, “I hope you will not speak of it.”

The stout banker mopped a cold perspiration from his face, with a good deal of nervousness. He was tolerably shaken up, and was making a wild effort to regain his equilibrium. Though not a man to go very deep into anything outside of finances, he was neither dogmatic nor unteachable. He knew what he didn’t know, which is a rare bit of wisdom, and in that territory were all things beyond the commonplace.

“Anyhow, whatever it was, Mrs. Layton, I’m obliged to you for telling me—more obliged than I can express,” he said, with unaffected earnestness—“and I will do as she wants me to. I will not turn Rob out.”

“I’m glad of that,” said his visitor, whose in-

instincts were always kind. "It could hardly do him any good."

The springs of the banker's emotions had been touched, and for a moment he looked like a big boy about to cry like a little boy. That's what he saw he must do, or pour himself out in uninvited and prodigal confidence, and that's what he did.

Thus it was that the banker's skeletons held high carnival that afternoon in their owner's business office. The reminder of the wife of his youth, the companion of his poverty, pressed the closet door unceremoniously open. The unhappy owner of the unique outfit took a full breath and unreservedly told how miserable he was, and that the only happiness he ever had was during the life of his first wife,

"When there was scarce bread to eat
And the wolf was at the door."

Now, he had money, and with it a wife who wore purple and fine linen, and loved nobody but herself. He spoke of his loneliness, and told what a poor, mean, paltry sham his life was, and how at times he had wondered if his dead wife could see and understand. He kept on till the closet of skeletons had been pretty well swept and aired, and they had stretched their legs in a fine dance after long suppression—kept on until the Butterfly held him and his wretchedness, so to speak, in

the hollow of her hand. When she went forth it was with a sure conviction that he would say nothing about her clairvoyant experiences. He would have enough repenting to do about the break-out of the skeletons to keep him busy.

CHAPTER X.

“YE SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND.”

Whatever happens to anybody it will be turned to beautiful results,
And nothing can happen more beautiful than death.
—*Walt Whitman.*

Two years had passed since Colonel Layton died. Renewed health and beauty had come to the Butterfly, who still contentedly earned and ate her own bread. Self-dependence has many rewards for its faithful disciples, not least among them being the conscious dignity that belongs to usefulness, and expresses itself in the greater ease and calmer assurance of bearing. Being a factor instead of a cipher gives a woman new value in her own eyes, as well as in the eyes of others.

If Chrissalyn could see into the world to follow this, Cartice wondered why she had had no glimpse of her husband. She had not, she said, and didn't want to. She hoped she never would see any one who had been near to her—it would be too terrible. She insisted on keeping all knowledge of her queer experiences from Prescott. His sniffs and sneers of ridicule would be too much for her, nor did Cartice feel equal to them either. According to Phillips Brooks there

are two kinds of cowardice, that of the conservative, and that of the radical, both of them fatal to freedom of thought. The former is afraid of being called an innovator, the latter fears to be thought conservative. One pliantly conforms to established methods; the other strikes defiance of them. Neither of them are free.

Perhaps Prescott was of the second. Perhaps he fought what he called superstition lest he be forced to believe in spite of himself. At any rate his two friends, perhaps the loyalest he had, were not bold enough to take him into their confidence. The intolerant always pay this penalty. They shut out confidence; they make people afraid of them; they keep light and good away from them, and drive angels themselves from their gates.

Cartice had a notion that the Butterfly and Prescott loved each other. Being something of which the gods themselves must approve, she could not understand the Butterfly's reticence on the subject, for the winged creature said not a word in regard to it. In spite of his aggressive character and some other deplorable defects, Prescott was a man to be proud of.

The three were much together. Prescott was the Butterfly's tireless escort everywhere, and they were usually anxious to have Cartice with them, and often they came together to pass a few hours with her in the evening, as she was in-

variably alone, Doring finding places more to his taste than the one he called home. Some of Prescott's friends said more than once that he was growing gentler and kinder, both on paper and off.

One evening the three friends were together in Cartice's apartment. Prescott's face was radiant, with a light never seen there before. It refined and softened his rugged features, making his countenance sweet and sunny.

"He has spoken," thought Cartice, "and this is the light of love that has naught to fear."

"Children," he said, after a time, with an unusual sweetness and confidence that became him well, "dear children, I am going to have happiness."

Both looked at him in affectionate inquiry.

"What kind of happiness?" asked the Butterfly, in a low voice, for there was that in his face which made them feel they were upon holy ground.

"I don't know! I don't know! That's the inexplicable part of it. Yet it seems so near I can almost reach out my hands and grasp it. This feeling has been upon me all day, and grows stronger every moment. I never experienced anything like it before. I don't know why or whence it comes, nor can I explain it well; but I feel it. Yes, I am very near to something good—near to happiness at last."

His voice sank low, and its tones had a thrill-

ing sweetness, a holy joy. His companions listened in silence, under a spell, their astonishment too vast for words. This was strange talk to come from him.

As in reverie he went on, after a pause, “All my life I have wondered how it would seem to be happy—really happy—if only for one hour. Misery I know well; but happiness and I have never met. Now, it is so near that I am already in its sunshine.” And he smiled, with the wonderful light on his face, and the smile was strangely sweet and beautiful.

The Butterfly shook herself out of the seriousness that was upon her, and said:

“You are going to have money—plenty of money—all unexpected as it comes in stories, and then—then you must give a big supper and Cartice and I will wear our prettiest gowns and be queens of the feast.”

He looked at her and smiled again, but did not even hear her chatter, for his soul was revelling in soundless melody. The exaltation was still on his face when he and Chriss bade Cartice good-night.

It was ten o'clock next day when Mrs. Doring reached the *Register* office. The entrance was full of men, with frightened faces, one of whom motioned to her to stop. Obeying, she stood in her tracks, chilled with a sense of disaster, until he reached her.

"You must not come in," he said. "There has been an accident at the elevator, and—Prescott is dead."

In silence she turned away. "And this was the happiness he felt so near to him—this?" she gasped. "Yes; it was so near, yet he did not understand, and we did not understand. And it was this! It was this!"

Prescott and death were irreconcilable. He was typical of life, force and action. Who could think of him as out of the conflict, as voiceless and silent? How could they ever learn to speak of him as one who was but is not?

"Saw you nothing, Chrissalyn—nothing that portended this?" Cartice asked.

"Nothing."

"Yet we had a sign, and were too blind to see it. His glorified face last night, and his strange feeling that happiness was near to him—these were signs, though we understood them not."

From the first a sense of the unreality of what had occurred came to Mrs. Doring and never left her. She followed the sable carriage of the dead to the cemetery, and returned to find his chair vacant, his pen idle, his presence gone forever, yet it was not like reality,—none of it. She shed no tears, nor was she sad. After the first startled moment she was at peace, though she knew not why.

Later she understood, as will all of us after a

little time. Now we weep and moan over sorrow, questioning it all, resenting it all; but a day is coming when we shall see and know and understand, and in that day we shall re-name many things, having until then miscalled them.

Now another serious event confronted Mrs. Doring. She had done her best to save her husband from himself but could not. Now she saw clearly at last, after much striving to bring compatibility out of incompatibility, that their union was a sham, a pretence, a lie, which if persisted in could only bring destruction to both of them. The conviction came to her that it must end.

Few experiences are bitterer or sadder for a sensitive, proud, high-spirited woman, than to face a domestic calamity like this. To see the love upon which she had founded her dearest hopes turn to ashes; to have what she once thought happiness become a burden so intolerable that it must be cast down, acknowledging disappointment, defeat and humiliation before the world, is, indeed, a bitter cup.

The coarse, the malicious, the undeveloped have sneers, jeers and taunts for this order of sufferer; but the enlightened, the truly moral bow before her reverently, not only because she has suffered, but because she stands for a great principle.

That the separation must be legal as well as actual, she saw would be best for both. Though the laws of their state were as humane as most others, still they had not evolved beyond the point, where in order to secure freedom from irksome marital bonds one of the parties must make a damaging charge against the other.

In talking it over with her husband she said, "We can arrange that as decently as the law will permit. If I make the application, I shall put it on the most inoffensive ground possible. If that is not agreeable to you, I will leave you and you can charge me with desertion."

Doring determined to do at once what he had long been arranging to do slyly, which was to go away himself, and as a Parthian arrow announced that he had intended to do so for sometime, but not alone.

It was a curious ending of the most delicate and important relation in life. Cartice gathered his effects together, packing everything with careful hands. When he went she watched him out of sight, and out of her life. Late into the night she still sat at the window, with a white face and eyes that stared into the darkness yet saw only the scenes of the past.

When Louis Doring boarded the train that evening he knew that within awaited him the sharer of his future fortunes.

His story can soon be told. It was the natural

outcome of his weak, selfish, stubborn and vain character. A few months later, deserted by the companion he had taken with him, penniless and alone in a southern city, he fell a victim to a malignant fever and passed out of life.

Cartice saw a brief mention of his death in a daily newspaper of the city in which it occurred. Accompanied by the faithful Butterfly she went at once, arriving there in time to put his mortal part out of sight with the decency custom requires.

These two loving hearts, both bruised from sad experiences, sat together late that night, talking of the curious events we call life and death. What they knew of one made it almost as terrible as the other.

“Ah, Butterfly, dear,” said Cartice, “I envy the women who have lost husbands worth lamenting. Such tears would be sweet, not bitter.”

“You call me a seeress, sometimes,” said Chrisalyn, “and perhaps I am, for I have been looking off into the future—a future that is very far away, indeed—and I see you, and you are happy. At least I read it so, for there is light all about you, and your face is like a picture of joy, it is so bright. And you are more beautiful than the sun, of whose radiance your clothes are made. But I am not with you, and it is, oh ! so far away—so far that it looks to be even on the other side of death though that is a queer way to put it.

Yes, you will be great and renowned some day as well as happy; but the road there is so long—I don't understand it—as long as several lives put together, I should say."

"And you, child of the far-away eyes, see you naught for yourself?"

"No; I never do; but I have a firm belief that I am yet to have satin couches and plenty of time to rest on them."

Splendor be it observed, was her deal of bliss, which was natural, she being a butterfly.

That night while her friend slept, Mrs. Doring sat by the open window thinking of the cold, still form she had seen put out of sight that day, and wondering with a chill sense of awe where now was the soul that had been represented by it. The moonlight whitened everything, and added its electric beauty and pale sadness to the loneliness of the night. She recalled other nights when that form had pulsated near her, and yet her spirit had been as lonely as now.

What did it all mean, the loving and the suffering, the dreaming and the awakening, the meeting and the parting? The road together had been long and hard, yet here was the end—the same end to which all roads lead—but what was the purpose of it all?

The problem of life; what can it be but the development of the individual, the unfolding of the soul, that marvelous, persistent, god-like thing

of whose unlimited possibilities we are but beginning to dream? And all that we do and have done to us, enjoy and suffer, think and dream, hope and aspire, make to that end, and are necessary and therefore good.

Memories came to her from a remote past, that antedated her birth—or so it seemed, for their origin was not within her earthly experiences. Yet surely they were memories, for one and all met with recognition. Faces she had loved came and smiled their sympathy and fondness. Familiar voices spoke to her—voices whose heavenly sweetness mortal ear hath not heard. Snatches of songs, celestial in their thrilling melody, floated by. Scenes restful and beautiful unrolled themselves for a moment and were gone. But it was the inner eyes which saw and the inner ears that heard.

Yes, she knew them all, for they were her people, her very own people, of whom she was always dreaming, and for whom she was always searching. They had come to comfort her. See, all smiled, not one wept, and their words and songs were joyous.

“My own people! My dear people, I shall yet find you,—I am finding you,” she said, glancing at the Butterfly’s pretty face, with its crown of sunshiny hair on the pillow, and thinking of Prescott, with his head like carven granite and eyes of fire; and others, with some of whom she

had clasped hands but once, yet knew them as her own.

But what of the new-made narrow mound in the cemetery? It presented itself at the end of every life, mutely asking an explanation of its existence. This was the wall against which the race of man has ever beaten the wings of inquiry. There it always stands, unresponsive and forbidding, the grim silence, like the shores that shut in the sea, saying, "Thus far shalt thou come and no farther."

Yet above and beyond the awe and wonder that filled her soul, was that curious sense of the unreality of death which had come when Prescott went away and still remained.

CHAPTER XI.

A LITTLE BOARD BRIDGES THE GREAT GULF.

Even here the soul of man is a member of the immaterial world; present and future, life and death, make one continuous whole in the order of spiritual nature.—*Kant*.

CARTICE DORING was one of those blessed beings who intermeddle not with the affairs of another. She asked no questions and was free from the vulgar vice of curiosity. She listened with sympathetic interest to all confidences that came to her, but solicited none. This made her a charming and lovable friend. Speaking once of the pernicious habit some well-meaning but ill-taught persons have of asking where you were born, if your parents are living, what religion you adhere to and the thousand other catechetical shots which compose their list of topics of conversation, she said:

“There may be a reason why the simplest and apparently most inoffensive question may give pain, so I never ask any. I have no wish to, for I have no curiosity. When I make a new acquaintance I am not concerned with the locality of his birth, the residence of his parents, or any part of his personal history. What he *is* individually, not the accidents of his life, interests me,

and that reveals itself as I become acquainted with him, without any probing on my part. Neither do I wish to bore into the sacred recesses of a friend's heart. What she tells me I shall listen to lovingly; what she does not tell me I do not even wish to know."

Hence it was that when the Butterfly fell into a meditative mood one evening when they were together, Cartice did not disturb her. By and by Chrissalyn said:

"I dreamed of Prescott last night. At least I suppose it was a dream, though it seemed extremely real. I was walking on the street and met him, and he held in his hand that queer little heart-shaped toy somebody sent you once—a thing with a French name that I don't recall now, but you said it meant 'little board.'—It has three legs, and one of them is a pencil."

"A planchette," suggested Mrs. Doring.

"Yes; that's it. Well, Prescott held that up before me and said, 'Try it, Butterfly! Try it!'"

Cartice's eyes widened with interest.

"You remember we did try to write with it once long ago," said the Butterfly, "but it only wrote foolishness, so we flung it aside and never tried again. I have been thinking about it all day, and should like to try it again, for I can't get Prescott's face, as I saw it last night, out of my mind."

The planchette was brought forth, and its history retold. The donor was a man from whom Death had taken every member of his family. For years the desire of his heart had been to know if the dead are dead, or if they still live though unseen of men. After he went to another city, he wrote Mrs. Doring that he had received some startling revelations through Planchette, and sent her one, that she might experiment for herself. Having some ability with the brush and palette, he had painted an allegory on the under side of the tiny walnut board. Psyche in the celestial robes was passing upward out of sight. Cupid in fashionable modern attire, had thrown aside his bow and arrows, and held his right hand on a Planchette, upon which he concentrated all his attention, saying to it :

“Tell me hopeful messages
To beguile earth's sorrow ;
But of evil things, Oh ! keep
Silence till to-morrow.
Then, perchance, I'll be asleep.”

“A pretty thought,” said Cartice, displaying the picture, and reading the text aloud. “Love is always anxious to know the fate of the soul. He hopes, but seeks for something to keep hope alive. Benson wrote me extraordinary things about Planchette, but I tried it several times and got nothing.”

“But I got something when I tried,” said Mrs.

Layton, with an air of interest. "To be sure it was rank nonsense, but it was something, and *I* didn't do it myself, whatever it was."

"No; you said it was the work of the devil, and flung the planchette aside in disgust. What a convenience the devil is, anyway! How could the world get on without him? Everything the veriest dunce doesn't understand is laid at his door. If he had never been invented, who would shoulder all the mysteries? Poor devil! Without being to blame he has been a terrific stumbling-block to the enlightenment of mankind. Wherever a persevering and heroic mind clipped out a crevice in the wall of ignorance, some dense-minded being was on hand to seize the devil and put him into it, to obscure whatever light might filter through. And so, though innocent himself, he has kept mankind in darkness through the centuries."

However, devil or no devil, they covered a table with a big sheet of white paper, of the kind used by the *Register*, and put Planchette upon it. The Butterfly put her tiny hand thereon, and they awaited its pleasure. As they were ignorant of the particular methods of its operation, they could but grope tentatively till they found the true way, just as the human race has groped upward through countless vain experiments and innumerable grievous blunders into such light as it now enjoys.

The occasion was in no way tinged with solemnity. They built no hopes on its outcome, nor gave it serious thought. It was the Butterfly's inspiration, born of her dream. So little importance did they attach to it, that they fell to chatting of other things at once, leaving Planchette to its own devices, Mrs. Layton's hand still resting on it, however.

Suddenly their chatter ceased. Planchette began to move across the paper, not aimlessly, as they expected, but deliberately and precisely, with intelligence and force. As suddenly as it had begun it stopped. They lifted it up and looked at its trail, and there was a word plainly and evenly written—the word "Gaily."

"More of its nonsense, just as I feared," sighed the Butterfly, in disgust.

"Well, try it again, dear," pleaded her friend. "It's worth studying, even if it does write nonsense. It's extraordinary that it writes at all."

With polite alacrity it wrote again with more ease and speed than before: "Do you not remember Gaily—Gaily, the Troubadour?"

This had no meaning for the Butterfly, and she was about to express her displeasure, when she glanced at her friend. Cartice was leaning far back in the chair, her face white and drawn, her mouth slightly open, her eyes startled and staring, and her breath coming in gasps.

"O Cartice, dearest! Don't look like that!

Don't!" Chrissalyn cried in a terrified voice, jumping up and seizing her friend in her arms, alternately shaking and embracing her. "What is it? What do you see? What has happened?"

Mrs. Doring tried to speak, but her mouth was parched and dry, her tongue leaden. She could only point with her finger at the writing.

"Yes, yes; but it's only foolishness—a line out of one of Moore's old songs. Don't be frightened at the silly thing. It must have come from my mind somehow, though I wasn't thinking of it."

"It means everything to me," Cartice gasped at last. "I understand it. Try again, dear. Try again. I will explain presently."

Rather rebelliously Chrissalyn straightened Planchette and put her tiny hand again upon it, growling; "I feel more like smashing the mischievous thing than humoring it, since it gave you such a fright."

"It was not fright, dear. It was astonishment, awe, wonder—many emotions blended, but fear was not among them."

Several minutes passed but Planchette moved not. The operator's patience would have been exhausted, had not her friend kept her faithful to the work with cheering speeches. Presently the weird little instrument began to walk off again, leaving this line in big, bold letters:

“Gaily, the Troubadour, offers his love once more to the tall, young pine.”

Cartice read it aloud, then threw up her hands and burst into weeping—a weeping that was half-laughing, an ebullition of pent-up emotion like that which comes at the fortunate ending of a long strain of anxiety.

“He lives! He lives!” she cried, in passionate joy. “All live—all, all who have gone out of our sight into the silence. Not one is dead. Not one has ever died. The greatest of questions is answered.”

Picking up Planchette she touched her lips to it reverently. Then putting her arms around her dazed friend, she kissed her again and again, saying:

“Chrissalyn, dear Chrissalyn, you have always been a blessing and a comfort to me; but now you have opened the whole universe to me; you have given me light—the brightest light that can come to any one. That scrawling line tells me more than any volume ever printed could. It is from an old-time friend, who died soon after I last saw him, one who loved me well. His name was Westfield, but because of his fondness for quoting from Moore in political speeches, and what the slang of newspaper offices calls ‘fine writing,’ his chums dubbed him, ‘Gaily, the Troubadour,’ and by this affectionate nickname one of his old comrades frequently addressed him

in my presence. And he named me a tall young pine. You knew none of this, for I am sure I never told you about him. Therefore it cannot have been taken from your mind, neither can it have been drawn from mine, for I never thought of *him*. If I had any one in mind, it was Prescott, because you had dreamed of Prescott in connection with Planchette, and because I have wondered so much about him since he went away—wondered in what part of the universe his dauntless spirit has found action, or if he *is* at all. Yet I scarcely dared hope even for him, for there was the possibility that death was the end of everything. I had no proof to the contrary.”

The Butterfly was a trifle dazed by the emotion of her friend, who was usually so self-possessed. Even by the light of her explanation she could scarcely take it in. The subject of death, no matter how treated, was repugnant to her. Even proof that death was not death had but little interest for her. Of course there was something afterward. Everybody knew that. Wasn't it all set down in the books somewhere, straight enough? But what was the use of dwelling on a subject that had so many unpleasant features in it? Or why delve after the facts in regard to it? That was her manner of dealing with this mighty question. What attracted her was life—yes, life, poor, cramped, hard and ugly as some

of it had been for her, still she loved it, found joy in it, craved it and its material pleasures and never wanted to be reminded that it had an end. A new gown could arouse her enthusiasm, and a flashing jewel give her supreme pleasure; but death, ugh! who wanted to talk of so gruesome an event? Dead people lived somewhere, as a matter of course, but wasn't it best to let them alone in their own place wherever it is, and have nothing to do with them?

This is a curious attitude of mind toward a subject of more importance to us than any other, yet thousands of presumably intelligent people think the same. They want the dead treated like dangerous criminals, although their nearest and dearest may be of them. They shut them away with relentless cruelty, doing their best to put them out of their very thoughts. In this way they slay them more effectually than Death himself has slain them. Resistlessly they move on to the same end themselves, yet zealously refuse to learn aught of what that end may be. Astonishing mental darkness and indolence, but alas! not uncommon.

It was some time before Cartice recovered self-possession and induced her friend to go on with the experiment. But the chain was broken, Planchette refused to move again.

Still, Mrs. Doring had enough to dwell upon. Late into the night she lay awake, thinking of

it, marveling at it and rejoicing in the new light that had come to her. True, it was a little thing, perhaps, or might appear so to those who are ever ready to make havoc of whatever differs from the usual and accepted, but its possibilities might be limitless, and already it had expanded her world into infinity.

Whatever the intelligence that acted through Planchette might be, it was subject to a law in its manifestations, of which as yet she knew next to nothing. For more light thereon she must study by experiment. Simple as this law appeared to be in its operations, it was mighty in its results, since it annihilated space and destroyed death, the last and greatest enemy whose destruction has long been foretold. But are not all nature's laws astonishingly simple, when understood? So simple that the searcher after knowledge, filled with delusion that it was afar off on inaccessible heights, for ages passed them by, trod them under foot, touched them at every turn, yet found them not.

A few evenings later the two friends were ready to begin the fascinating work of experimenting with Planchette, the Butterfly's tiny hand resting on its heart-shaped back, inviting it to action. Was ever priestess of the occult so emphatically a creature of worldly attributes as she? Her pretty face, soft, fair hair, slight, graceful figure modishly attired, and gentle bear-

ing conveyed no suggestion of power to reveal hidden mysteries.

In silence they waited a little while, Planchette as still as could be. Then, unexpectedly it whirled away at a startling pace, with a force well-nigh resistless. When it reached the end of the paper, which completely covered the table, they picked it up and carried it back to the place of beginning, the hand of the pretty priestess was replaced, and it went on at tearing speed, until its message was finished. Then they looked and saw this in big, firm chirography:

“Love laughs at Death as well as at locksmiths —Pagan.”

Cartice read it aloud with a whitening face and staring eyes.

“Prescott!” she whispered, with a husky voice, motioning to Chrissalyn to put her hand again on Planchette. Pagan was a name she had given him and which he delighted in, though unknown to any but her. The little board whirled away again with the same determined swing. Its very movements were characteristic of him, who had ever a trace of savageness and fierceness in all he did and much that he said. These were its words:

“Butterfly, tell her what I told you as we went home that last night.”

Now Chrissalyn began to tremble and tears gushed from her shining eyes. The conviction

that it was Prescott who thus silently spoke to them came to her with overwhelming force.

“Cartice, it is Prescott, I am sure. He loved you with all his heart, and you know how intense that heart was in everything. I saw it from the very day I introduced him to you at the market house, when we went to hear Gabriel Norris preach. He adored you, but never spoke of it, and you were too blind and had too little vanity to see it. But that last night before his death, when he and I were walking home together after we had spent the evening with you, he told me about it. You remember he spoke of having a presentiment that happiness was near him, and he looked almost transfigured that night. He said he believed that somehow you would soon be free from your husband, and then he would take you whether or no. He swore to that. But the next morning he was dead. That’s what he wants me to tell—that’s what he means when he says ‘Love laughs at death as well as at locksmiths.’ He is the same—just the same kind, fierce old savage. He loves you still.”

“Why, Butterfly, this is astonishing,” said Cartice, in amazement. “I thought you and he loved each other, and that you were made for each other.”

“*I* loved him; but he loved you, not me.”

This touched Mrs. Doring beyond her power to express. She tried to speak, but could say

nothing, for a great lump, like a live coal, had closed her throat.

"I was never jealous," continued Chrissalyn, "no, never; but a trifle melancholy at times, wishing he loved me instead of you, because I saw that you didn't love him, only as a good comrade, and didn't know that he loved you. If you had loved him I don't think I should have been jealous, because I love you so much."

Both pairs of eyes were moist now. Cartice rearranged Planchette, and after kissing her friend's dainty hand placed it thereon again.

"Yes; it is true, I love you, Cartice, and did from the beginning," wrote the little board, with the same impetuous dash.

"I thank you for telling me," said Cartice, humbly. "But how are we to be sure that you are Prescott. Give us a proof if you can, though it be only to write your name in the old way."

"Gordon Prescott," was instantly and rapidly written in the firm, sharp-pointed handwriting characteristic of the man—a good fac-simile of the original signature, even without making allowance for the clumsiness of the implement. Then came "Good-night" in the same hand, and nothing could induce Planchette to further movement.

They talked it over. Even Chrissalyn was interested. Prescott writing through Planchette did not seem like dead people coming back in the

gruesome way she dreaded. Rather was it as though he had never died, but only become invisible. There was nothing about this to inspire terror. After the first surprise of it, it even seemed natural; and it was a pleasure to have a word from him, though it were of his love for another. What matter? She loved him,—that was enough. And it was a comfort to know that he was sometimes near, in spite of the fact that she had believed dead people ought to keep to themselves. However, with Prescott it was different. Somehow he was not dead people.

Then, too, the priestess had her vanity—a streak of the kind that wants appreciation for her ability as well as her beauty. Cartice's gifts of pen and pencil she had craved, if not envied. Now that she knew she had a power her friend had not—one which Cartice thought of inestimable value—she saw that this gave her additional importance in Mrs. Doring's eyes, hence she secretly plumed herself a little.

She consented to continuing their experiments with Planchette on condition that no one else should ever be told. Were it known, she would be called a "spirit medium," and that would be disgraceful, unendurable. They might say almost anything else of her and she wouldn't mind; but to have that name fastened upon her would be a calamity.

A "medium!" To her the word was beyond

words in its despicable significance. Were not mediums a disreputable order of human buzzards, who preyed upon the credulity and holiest emotions of honest folk? Were they not despised, abhorred, shunned and feared by the better class of society? Were they not ignorant, frowsy, ugly and generally dirty? Did they not invariably say "sect" when they meant "sex," and talk mind-weakening twaddle about "controls," "influences," "impressions" and so on, in English that was in open warfare with all grammatical rules? And were they not frequently chummy with invisible Indians,—going about boasting that they were constantly attended by some "Blackhawk," "Fire-eye," "Thunder-Tongue," "Yellow Feather," or "Crow-on-the-head," who made them the mouthpieces of idiotic gibbering?

Do they not come out of cabinets, wearing trailing robes and tin crowns, trying to palm themselves off as dead and gone kings and queens? Have they not an uncanny affinity for tables? And do they not talk through trumpets, ring bells and play other stupid pranks and lay the blame of it all on the defenceless dead? Had they not thrown discredit upon Noah Webster himself, accusing him of a written message which said, "It is tite times"?

Truly their sins were as scarlet. Cartice admitted their iniquities without argument, and

promised her friend that never, never, even in her most secret thoughts would she call her a medium, much less breathe the opprobrious epithet to others.

They went patiently on with their investigation, devoting two evenings a week to Planchette and telling no one. It was by no means all fair weather work either. They soon found that the only thing they could be sure of was that they could depend on nothing; that with the intelligence which manipulated Planchette no contract could be made. They came, or they came not, just as it suited their good pleasure, and were obedient to no mandate or appeal. They were arbitrary always, and, as in most affairs of life, it was the unexpected that happened. From what the investigators could learn, it would seem, as Mr. W. T. Stead says, that although this would is queer the next appears to be queerer.

As they went on, they held more and more to the belief that they were actually communicating with persons who had lived in flesh-and-blood bodies like our own, and who still lived, retaining the same characteristics that distinguished them here, but invisible to our eyes—inhabitants perhaps of the much discussed Fourth Dimension of Space. At least, one and all represented themselves as the persons whom we call dead, but who live—live in a freer, larger life.

Occasionally they gave proofs of their identity

so convincing that all doubt vanished. They made it clear that the spark of divinity we call individuality is a persistent, indestructible, deathless thing. Again, messages were written which were not only trifling and valueless, but also unsettling.

However, Cartice and the pretty priestess went on, feeling their way through laws as yet scarcely discernible, but stupendous. It was soon evident that each spirit could manifest its individuality through Planchette as forcibly and unmistakably as is done here by means of epistolary correspondence—more clearly, perhaps, since when the little board writes, its movements and general behavior betray the mannerisms of the unseen writer. When a woman spoke through it the feminine touch was unmistakable, and the writing itself showed the finer element of femininity. It must be remembered that the Butterfly, as the visible operator, was simply part of the implement. The real writers were inhabitants of the unseen world. These the two investigators sometimes spoke of as spirits, though they realized that assuredly they were people like ourselves, though existing under different conditions. They were spirits, without doubt; yet so are we, though most of us are unaware of our true being.

But few women came. Cartice was surprised at this, and asked one the reason why. She said the men were stronger, and were so eager to write

that they crowded women out and took possession of the opportunity. Hence it may be supposed that masculine selfishness is not eliminated from the character by dropping the body, and that what we call brute strength, (which is in reality, strength of the spirit) is still formidable where bodies, as we know them, are not.

It was noticeable that these invisible folk seldom spoke of themselves as dead. They had almost no use for the word. They spoke of those we call living as "people still with you," and of those whom we call dead as "with us." When asked if they knew such and such a person, they sometimes met the question with the inquiry, "Is he with you or with us?"

At times they readily wrote during a whole evening, first one, then another, and so on, each writer showing a different personality by means of manner, chirography, style of speech and character of thought. At such times page after page as large as the table top would be covered. Again, evenings would pass with but trifling results, and now and then no communication whatever would be received. Nor could the investigators learn the reason of this. Simply, so it was, and the fact had to be accepted without explanation.

The revelations were not always serious. Occasionally they were of clown-like jollity, evidently proceeding from clownish intellects. Fre-

quently the writers refused to give any clue to their identity, and as for names there was a palpable avoidance of them that was puzzling. Occasionally a name would be given as readily as when its owner was here, but usually friends and acquaintances revealed themselves by their peculiar characteristics and references to past events, and this, of course, was the better method, as any mischievous spirit could pretend to be somebody else, if names were the sole reliance.

Prescott came often, and was always unmistakably Prescott. Transition had not changed him. His individuality, so original, distinct and strong, was as conspicuous and recognizable, revealed through the little board, as when he had mingled with men, uttering himself boldly, without fear or favor.

Sometimes he burst upon his two faithful friends like a tornado, making Planchette fly fiercely. They could almost see him sweep others aside and take possession. His speech was crisp, keen and sparkling, as in the old days, but, if possible, he was less communicative about himself than ever. When they questioned him on that point, he made neat evasions; but they gathered the impression that he was not entirely satisfied. Though he did not say so, they could not help feeling that the activities of life here still attracted him, and that he was not content at being unable to take part in them.

Remembering his sneers and jeers at all belief in the extension of life beyond death, in whatever form, Cartice reminded him of them, and asked what he thought now of his previous errors. With his customary frankness he answered :

“I was a fool then ; but I confess now that I always believed far more than I would have acknowledged. I was afraid you would think me weak if I admitted all I thought possible. I was a coward, you see, though I showed precious little mercy to other cowards.”

Then she asked about his presentiment of happiness on his last evening on earth, and he answered : “I suppose it was given me so I might know that the end of trouble and turmoil was at hand ; but I was blind, as you all are, and did not understand.”

She begged him to relate his experiences in the new life from his first moment of consciousness. To this entreaty he replied :

“I will try to do so sometime when I am better instructed than now. As yet I am too new here to tell you what you wish to know. I have much to learn before I can be a safe teacher for anybody.”

To many questions he made neither answer nor apology for his failure to answer. It was plain that he could not, would not or dare not tell much about the life he was now living. Once in response to a particularly direct question bear-

ing on that, he said, with a shade of sadness in the words :

“Wait in patience, and be as happy as you can till your time comes.”

And again : “Could you but see how things are carried on here you would know how foolish some of your questions are.”

From this they gathered that conditions in the unseen world are vastly different from those we are familiar with here, but in what respect they could form no idea.

He had been a strong advocate of cremation. When asked if he still held to his former opinions on that subject, he said :

“To us it makes no difference what is done with the carcass. To you it is important that it does not endanger the public health.”

Once when Cartice remarked to her friend, as they sat together awaiting Planchette's pleasure, that perhaps the disembodied people suffer because of the destruction of their bodies, Prescott sprang upon them in a kind of fury, writing with savage haste :

“Do you suffer when you cut your finger-nails and throw away the cuttings? Or when you clip your hair and burn the clippings? The body is of the same character, mere waste material—cast-off clothes.”

When asked why he did not always come when they called him and awaited him, he said :

"I wish you understood. I come when possible, but I cannot always control the matter."

Sometimes Cartice and Chrissalyn devoted an afternoon to Planchette, but generally with less satisfactory results than when they experimented in the evening. The reason of this they could not fix upon until Prescott gave them a clue. On one such occasion, he said with petulance: "Why do you call us in the broad day, when we can give you more satisfaction at night? Day is your time for action, but night is ours. Life here is the antithesis of life with you. Conditions are reversed."

"May we inquire why you cannot do so well for us in the daytime when you do come?" Mrs. Doring asked, humbly.

"Because the vibrations of light are destructive to the power we make use of for purposes of communication with you."

This, then, is a rational explanation of the dark séances so much condemned by persons unacquainted with psychic law, and which, unhappily afford such fine opportunities for knavish deception.

"You speak of our calling you. Does it really call you when we sit with the Planchette and ask for you?"

"Yes; through a law it would be difficult for you to understand, however carefully I might try to explain it. Even I as yet comprehend it

but dimly. Your thought reaches us, for thought is omnipotent in all the universe, and is the finest form of electricity which travels with incredible speed. Your desire is a great force going forth to draw to you what you desire. The law of demand is met by the law of supply throughout all worlds, when it is properly set in motion. Your sitting expectantly, with Planchette as the instrument of communication, makes a magnetic centre, a veritable telegraph office to which we can come and through which we can transmit messages. It is all done under law, and so is everything in the universe. Find out the laws that govern your own being and there is no limit to your powers."

CHAPTER XII.

AND THE PROPHET WAS STONED.

Those who believe, as I do, that spiritual beings can and do, subject to general laws and for certain purposes, communicate with us, and even produce material effects in the world around us, must see in the steady advance of inquiry and of interest in these questions the assurance that, so far as their beliefs are logical deductions from the phenomena they have witnessed, those beliefs will at no distant date be accepted by all truth-seeking inquirers.—*Alfred Russell Wallace.*

ONE Sunday afternoon when the two friends sat together, with Planchette as telephone to the invisible world, the responses were unusually prompt and full, for a daytime effort. Prescott came and was in a most obliging mood, as charming as of old. Without warning, when in the middle of a long sentence that he was writing at his usual furious pace, some invisible force drew the Butterfly's arm from Planchette and sent the little board flying across the room. At the same instant she rose, raised her right hand and pointed directly before her, her face ashy and an unearthly look in her dilated eyes. Straining her faculty of sight Cartice looked in the direction of her friend's outstretched finger, but saw nothing. In a few seconds the beautiful seeress sank to her chair exhausted, with dry mouth and

stiffened tongue, like one who returns to consciousness after a deep faint.

Mrs. Doring rushed for water for her to drink, and cologne with which to lave her face, embraced her, and soothed her with reassuring words until she was herself again, though more subdued and humble than ever before.

“What was it, dear?” asked Cartice at last.

“Prescott,” she gasped. “He was as real in appearance as ever I saw him in life. The scar on his left cheek was plain, and the tooth in front that had been built up with gold was just as it used to be, for he smiled and I saw it distinctly. He spoke, but I could not understand what he said. He came so sudden, and I was so frightened. I hope he will never do that again. It gives me a horrible feeling to see any of them.”

After a little coaxing she touched Planchette again, to ask an explanation of the singular occurrence.

“I did not mean to frighten you, poor child,” wrote Prescott, “but I wanted to see if I could make myself visible to you for an instant. The exhaustion you experienced afterward was not all owing to fright. In order to appear to you I took a certain substance from your body with which to make myself visible. I made my body, for the moment, out of yours. That leaves you weaker, but what I took will be restored to you. This vital substance is everywhere, and your

body, being a magnet, attracts it to you, particularly when you are out doors in the sunlight. Oh, if you but knew the value of sunshine, and air—pure, fresh air.”

“Why couldn’t I see you, too?” Cartice asked. “I should not be frightened; but even so, I am willing to be.”

“I have tried to lift the veil from your eyes, but cannot.”

“But the scar and the tooth of gold? Were they not of the cast-off body only, or do you have them still?” she asked.

“The human eye must have that with which to indentify those from this side, so they are simulated as they last appeared in the flesh.”

One evening, when another was writing, Planchette was unexpectedly and violently flung to the floor, by a blow on the Butterfly’s delicate arm, from an unseen hand. When order had been restored, Prescott took possession, and it was plain to be seen that he was agitated. He wrote: “I tried to prevent that, but could not. Chrissalyn must be prepared to expect almost anything. The situation here is incomprehensible to you.”

“What is it that makes the Butterfly a medium, if she will pardon the word?” Cartice asked.

“Something for which there is yet no proper word. You would call it, magnetism. She is

wonderful,—powerful, magnetic to the dead, as you call us, as well as to the living—you cannot imagine how much.”

Cartice had ever been sensible of a powerful and unaccountable attraction in her friend. She had always loved to watch Chrissalyn, she knew not why, loved to be near her and never wearied of her. For others, both men and women, the Butterfly possessed the same attraction. If she wanted to ensnare the most wary masculine mortal, she had only to cast her eyes upon him and he was hers. If she wished for the good-will or friendship of a woman, a smile and a pleasant word or two were all she need give in order to gain it.

“Tell me, what is magnetism?” was the next question.

“A power we cannot see but can feel—the power that attracts through all nature, but I cannot define it, for as yet I know very little about it myself.”

When asked to explain his manner of using Planchette, Prescott said:

“When the Butterfly’s hand rests upon it we stand behind her, with our hands above hers—a few inches above—and we move her hand and Planchette by the power of magnetism.”

“Why can’t you use my hand as well as hers?” Cartice asked.

“Because you are a positive. Your magnetism

is of the controlling and not the controllable kind."

Early in her investigations Mrs. Doring learned that the people on the unseen side of life are like unto those seen, in that there are good and bad, wise and foolish, busy and idle, truth-tellers and liars, sane and insane. Character there is exactly what it was here, growing better if it aspire and worse if it be indifferent to growth, for evolution apparently goes on forever and forever.

She learned, too, that a message was not necessarily infallible, because it came from that we call a spirit. Frequently it was woefully fallible. Liars will lie and the mischievous make mischief wherever they are. In short, undeveloped souls, no matter where they dwell, give very direct evidence of their imperfection.

Yet, all things considered, Cartice met comparatively few obstacles in her study of psychic life and law. Much, to be sure, was inexplicable and perplexing; but that which was satisfying outweighed all that was disheartening. To the harmony existing between Chrissalyn and herself she attributed the remarkable success of their efforts, harmony being the key to all the secrets and forces of nature. Then too they sat with business-like regularity. Now she understood why the "conditions" for which professional mediums are such noted sticklers, are necessary.

When we stop to think of it, we see that we must comply with prescribed conditions to do anything. If we send a letter through the post office, the conditions imposed oblige us to stamp it properly and post it. If we merely write the letter and fling it out of the window, ignoring the needful conditions, most assuredly it will never reach its destination. If we wish to make a journey the conditions oblige us to go aboard whatever railroad carriage or ship will take us where we want to go.

The knowledge gained through Planchette was precious beyond price to Mrs. Doring. "Is it not the answer to the riddle of the ages?" she asked herself. "Does it not change the face of everything, by giving us not only the key to death, but to the great mystery of life? In the light of this knowledge life takes on an importance, a sacredness and responsibility formerly inconceivable. Heretofore we have hoped that it goes on beyond the destruction of the body, now we know it does, and that we are shaping our destiny by every thought and act—building indeed for eternity.

"Of what moment are the ills of life here, with this glorious vista before us? Who, having seen this light, need be cast down by any earthly trouble? In the face of it are not all the experiences which wring our hearts and drain us of our tears mere fictions or illusions?"

“Since Death is dead, what is there to affright or distress us? Though to-day be lost, to-morrow is ours. Though our dear ones pass out of sight there is neither separation nor bereavement. Scientific knowledge makes it plain that immortality is not dependent upon belief; but is a fact in nature. Though we may wander in any part of the universe there is nothing to fear, for we are indestructible. Disease, war, accident, every terror known to man, is swept out of existence by this indisputable demonstration of our deathlessness.

“How poor and pitiful is the pursuit of happiness in which all engage here, when seen by the light of this revelation! Is it not clear as sunshine that the purpose of life is not happiness, as we misinterpret the word, but growth? And how shall we grow? By getting knowledge of law and living according to that knowledge. Then we need seek no more for happiness for it will be one of our indestructible possessions—the happiness for which nature destined us, but which consists not in external conditions, but internal development.”

Under the influence of this knowledge Mrs. Doring became transformed into a new being. Her previous life now seemed to have been simply a blind groping after the most unstable and foolish ideals,—a more intellectual childhood. So uplifted and filled to overflowing was she with

joy and gratitude that her face took on a new beauty that impressed even the least observing of her friends. But one flavor of bitterness tinged her cup, and that was that she was forbidden to share the glad tidings with others.

Chrissalyn had been insistent that nothing be told, and Cartice was obliged to yield to her ruling on this point, and also saw the necessity for it, but longed fervently to gather in many dwelling in darkness and share her light with them. Why hide it under the bushel of timidity? Was not all the world searching for that which had come in beautiful simplicity and generous fulness to her? How grateful others would be to know what she knew? She was humbly, profoundly grateful, and of course they, too, would be.

After a time this pent-up fountain began to overrun its borders and trickle its way to other ears. When she heard people bewailing the difficult and cruel conditions under which they suffered, she could not help giving of her inexhaustible store of comfort. She must say to them, "These things are unreal and of no moment. Your true life is above and beyond them always, and is of unlimited possibilities here and hereafter."

And when they wept because of some slain lamb, she said, "He is not dead; he never died and never shall die. This is an appearance

only, an illusion. There is no death. Life goes on, on, without end, I *know* it."

In order that they might believe and be comforted, she related the experiences on which her assurances were based, leaving out Chrissalyn's name, of course.

She met the fate of all who have lovingly tried to set poor, ignorant humanity free from its self-imposed chains. She was stoned.

Some heard her with tolerant pity, as we humor weak-minded people by pretending to accept their statements and vagaries, but turned from the subject as quickly as they could. Not a few sneered openly, and with the brutal frankness of small and self-satisfied minds coarsely expressed their contempt for her credulity. Others patronizingly said they believed in *her* honesty, but were positive she was being deceived. Still others shrugged their shoulders in disgust, saying that they loathed the "supernatural," and would none of it. This benighted class labels their dead with that obnoxious word and shoves them out of mind as quickly as possible. Some of the contemptible creatures who advertise their lack of intelligence and breeding by putting their hands over their mouth when they talk to hide their impolite and ignorant grinning, could not listen to Cartice with naked lips at all. But perhaps she was most astonished at the "conventional believers who disbelieve," those who accept all the

spirit manifestations described in the book of their faith, yet reject everything modern that helps to prove the truth of them.

Some listened to her story and then asked the surprising, the astounding question: "What good can come of it all, even if it be true?" If the dead did not come to tell them how to make fortunate financial speculations, or whom they are destined to marry, they saw no use in their coming at all.

Here and there Mrs. Doring encountered some who took interest in her revelations as a matter of curiosity, and wanted to gratify their love of wonder-mongering, by seeing Planchette at work.

A few, a sacred few, gave reverent ear, and were eager to learn all they could of the marvelous and mysterious thing called life; but these had become as little children—receptive, and therefore were prepared to enter the kingdom of knowledge, which is heaven.

But, alas! for the unfortunate many who cannot be enlightened, because they are already wise in their own conceit. Having lived here a score or two of years they fancy they know all the Creator's plans and purposes and can learn no more. At the door of their mind they post a sentinel armed with a club, whose duty it is to beat and drive away any stray angel in the guise of a thought or idea that may wander near.

Some who did not want to be disturbed in

their enjoyment of things external, pettishly said: "All you tell may be true, but one world at a time is my motto." Yet any one who said that a child should be left uninstructed and unprepared for the grown-up life ahead of him would, very appropriately, be called a fool.

Cartice learned what all prophets and teachers have learned to their cost—that the world is in bondage to its own ignorance, because it refuses to be liberated. The minds of men are in thrall to a law we have but recently named—the law of hypnotism, which is at once both the agent of darkness and of light.

Everybody lives continually under hypnotic influence, otherwise the power of suggestion. What we call public opinion is thought that has massed itself into a barrier so formidable that only spirits the most heroic and dauntless dare assail it. The many are fused together as one and become a gigantic hypnotizer of men.

It has been demonstrated a million times that if there is anything a man cannot do it is to stand out against the united thought of his fellow men. Human beings, for the most part, are in slavery to whatever thought has formed their environment, "as neat prisoners as ever slept in jails." In other words they are hypnotized and refuse to be aroused from their hypnotic sleep.

All who allow others to do their thinking live

and die in a hypnotic trance. The thought that is steadily thrown upon the minds of children year after year usually hypnotizes them for life. This is proven in their religious leanings. The majority follow the lead of their parents and it is the same in politics. The boy is a democrat or republican, because his father was. We call it the force of early education, but we might as well say early hypnotism.

The press is the greatest of hypnotic operators. It makes public opinion through the hypnotic principle. Its daily reiteration puts the minds of impressionable readers into as profound a hypnotic trance as any professional operator ever achieves. Every orator who sways his audience does so by means of the hypnotic law, and every writer who thrills his readers sets the same law in motion. In it lies the power of all government, from the primitive paternal to the broadest Republic the earth has yet produced—the will of the passably intelligent few is imposed upon the less intelligent many.

Even the most potent force known—the attraction that draws the sexes together, operates largely through hypnotism, or suggestion. Do we not become like that we hear and see and live among? Are we not the product of whatever thought we have absorbed during our life? In short, we are that thought embodied, neither more nor less. Steady suggestion makes public

opinion, that terrible, formidable, irresistible wall against which new thought must beat and hack and storm for centuries sometimes before an incision can be made in it.

We are all more or less in an hypnotic sleep. Certain intellectual hair-splitters deprecate the use of the word, hypnotism, when employed to describe a condition of mind that is not sleep, as we commonly use that term. Yet we may be awake to certain facts and asleep to others. When one cannot see a truth for a time and then recognizes it, we say he awakens to it. Was he not asleep as far as it was concerned before?

The hypnotic principle is as old as the human race. Yea, the hills are young beside it. By means of it we have become what we are, and because of it our progress has been slow, for the hypnotized subject holds to his illusions with a tenacity that throws barnacles into the shade. We were hypnotized into the old thought that enslaves us, and must be hypnotized out of it into that which shall set us free.

This law is operative far beyond our range of knowledge. It links this world or this state of being, rather, to the one that follows it.

What is the spirit medium but a person under the hypnotic influence of a resident of the invisible world? And many who do not dream of it are hypnotized to an astonishing extent by suggestions from the same source.

Therefore, it is not remarkable that Cartice Doring found nearly everybody holding aggressively to the thought that had formed them, no matter how limited and erroneous it might be, and ready to fight, tooth and nail, anything contrary to it. They groaned in pain, yet at a suggestion of relief from misery they but hugged it closer, lest it be taken from them by force.

She did not expect any one to believe so tremendous a tale as she had to tell on hearsay evidence alone; but she hoped to find some interest and desire to search and learn. When many turned away and she grew heartsick because they would not let her help them with that which had helped her, she thought she understood Jesus weeping over Jerusalem. "Ye would not! no; ye would not!" is ever the cry of all who yearn to make the yoke easy and the burden light for humanity.

And yet no earnest effort made by any soul is entirely vain. Mrs. Doring found two who would among the many who would not—two who were eager to learn, who begged for the chance. They were the Joys, the last persons one would expect to turn their attention to anything not known by the name of pleasure. As a matter of fact they were Mr. and Mrs. Hanley, but everybody called them the Joys, because their days were an unbroken ripple of delight, and they were continually making a joyful noise over

something. They joyed in each other, in their children, in their friends, in their home, in the world at large, in life, in everything. All days of the year were for them days of jubilee. Everybody welcomed them because they carried with them a joyful atmosphere, a little of which generally rubbed off and stuck to those whom they visited, for a time at least. A gay, guiltless pair were they, with no need of prayer, and no sins to be forgiven, so far as any one could see. It may be wondered why they cared to learn anything about life's extension since they found this world so pleasant. Yet care they did, and gladly turned from the impermanent things of the world that had delighted them to study reverently the great question of our destination.

Chrissalyn liked them and was finally persuaded to let them enter Planchette's charmed arena, on condition that they tell it not in Goth nor whisper it in Askalon.

Their very first experience was convincing beyond doubt or question. All they had joyed in before was as nothing to the joy they found in the knowledge that came to them through the little board. In spite of their pleasure-loving natures and phenomenal optimism, they belonged to the thinking fraternity; and now that their outlook was extended beyond the boundaries that so far had hedged them in, they saw ahead an

endless life of Joy, and that intensified and ennobled the joys of the present. They had been happy always, but now they were secure in their happiness—nothing could take it from them.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TONGUES OF ANGELS.

“When by suffering thou hast learned not to suffer—by passion learned calmness;
 Then shalt thou know what I am to thee—then shalt thou be
 A clean mirror where I am reflected—a face with a splendor
 which burns not!
 Past all pain, seeing Me thou shalt know Me—the Strength
 and the Truth of Thyself.”—*Voltairine DeCleyre*.

Being may be called the poorest, but it is at the same time the most marvelous concept of our whole mind. It is the *sine qua non* of all we are, we see, we hear, we apprehend and comprehend. It is not our body, nor our breath, nor our life, nor our heart, nor what is most difficult to give up—our mind and intellect. It is simply that in which all these reside—that, in fact, in which we move and have our being.

—*F. Max Müller*.

The truth of being and the truth of knowing are one.

—*Bacon*.

CARTICE and Chrissalyn permitted the Joys to join them in their investigations at certain times, but for the most part they pursued their study of psychic life alone. As they went on, their experiences became more interesting and convincing. In the new world opened to them they made new friends. To be sure they could not see these friends, but they learned to know them well, to love them, and to distinguish one from another as readily and certainly as though they were of the visible part of creation.

One of these new friends called himself Moreau and won their hearts completely with his courteous speech, kind instincts and gentle manners. Indeed, after making his acquaintance they understood how little the personality depends upon that which we call the person, which is but a mask, as the word originally meant. He came often and sometimes remained a whole evening, kindly writing for those who had not yet learned to manipulate Planchette, and answering questions with well-bred patience and never-failing politeness. When asked why he came to them and remained so faithful, when he had not known them here, he explained that he was attracted to both of them, because they were magnetic to him; but that beside, it was his especial mission to make lonely women happier. They learned to rely implicitly upon everything he said, just as they did on the word of Prescott, whose strict truthfulness had been his one vanity.

"How long is the act of dying?" Moreau was asked.

"It is longer for some than for others; but you are sleeping at the time and know it not."

This statement was corroborated by the others. They said the death-sleep in some cases was of several days' duration,—days as we reckon them here, but there Time's markings are unknown, for Time is not.

When Moreau was asked whether he knew

everything about his friends here, present and to come, he said: "Not everything. There are some things we are not permitted to know any more than you are."

"Do you pass on into other stages of existence—experience a change analogous to our dying here?"

"I think so; but I am no more certain of that than you are about your future state."

"How do you travel?"

"Like lightning, or even more swiftly. We think of a place and in the same instant we are there. This is a thought world. So is yours, but you are blind to the power of thought on your plane."

"Are you affected by the sorrows and pains of those you love, who are still on earth?"

"We cannot help feeling the troubles of earth when they touch what you would call our heart-strings. But, as it were, we see with larger eyes—we understand better the purpose of suffering and the good that comes out of it."

A friend to Cartice who had achieved considerable eminence as an analytical author, came occasionally. In the noonday of success she went away, after months of great physical suffering. When asked whether she was happy, she replied:

"It is happiness to me to have no aching heart, no pain, no burning brow."

“Can you come to us when you please?”

“Sometimes only, not always. I feel a restraint, though no restraint seems put upon me.”

“How do you occupy yourself, Edith?”

“We do not have to occupy ourselves. We are occupied by others only. I cannot tell you better.”

When questioned as to the kind of clothing used there, she said: “The mist of earth is not a substance to be measured, weighed or worn by you. The material of our raiment is a thing of almost misty texture.”

“What is death?”

“To that question I will give you an explanation given me by one far wiser than I and much older in this realm of life: ‘Death simply denotes a rising from inactivity to action, from obscurity to eminence, awaking from sleep, or promotion from an inferior condition.’”

“Is there a resurrection?”

“Every death is a resurrection.”

“Edith, do you ever wish to be back here in the body?”

“Never. There would be nothing to gain and much to lose.”

“Why is it that although you and others come and talk with us clearly and freely at times, there is yet so much of your new life of which you tell us nothing?”

“There are many reasons, which I am not per-

mitted to give, nor could you understand them. I myself comprehend them but dimly. I simply obey the law."

"What is the judgment, if there is a judgment?"

"For me it is the beholding of my mistakes."

"What is the most wonderful phase of your present life, if I may be pardoned for so bold a question?" Cartice asked.

"The knowledge that love is all there is—that it fills all universes; lights all worlds; encompasses every soul, and is the life of every soul. This is as true of your world as of ours; but nearly all there refuse to believe it. Here we cannot doubt it—that is, those who have love in their own hearts cannot doubt it. Those who love not do not know it, for all is darkness to them; but that darkness disappears when they begin to love."

"What is love?"

"The living principle of good, which by a law that includes and governs all that is, constantly flows out from the infinite centre. The more you have of it the more of good in its highest and best form will you receive, because it is the greatest of all magnets, irresistibly attracting its like. Love is God. God is love.

"You are destined to realize this fully some day; but you might realize it even now if you would, and then the whole face of the earth

would change and become new and beautiful. Heaven, indeed, would be opened. But the love I speak of is not the sentiment that usually goes by that name on earth, which too often is but an exaggeration of self, a kind of sublimated selfishness, going out to special persons with whom your lives are intertwined and whose well-being particularly conduces to your own. No, no; the love that is God is universal in its application, enfolding the humblest and most wayward as well as the highest and most perfect. Cultivate this love and you will find heaven even on the earth. All good will come to you. It is the kingdom of righteousness spoken of in your scriptures, to which, if you first seek and attain, all other things shall be added. Love, even in its crudest, most selfish expression and narrowest interpretation yet has in it a spark of the divine principle from the great source or centre which lights and gives life to all worlds and all consciousness."

"If you could give us but one precept to live by, what would it be?"

"That which was given you by the beloved disciple: Love one another, for love is, indeed, the fulfilling of the law. But remember that 'one another' includes all that live. The law is not fulfilled when you only love those of your own household, or such as minister to your enjoyment."

“What are we here for? What is the purpose of life?”

“What is the purpose of any school? Is it not to fit its pupils for that which is to follow?”

“How can we best do that?”

“By the unfoldment of your souls or selves—the best possible development of every unit. Your ethics have taught you to aim at the highest good to the greatest possible number; but the true ethics of love are only content with the highest possible good to each individual.”

“How do the things of earth appear to you now—the things we value and strive for so hard, wealth, fame, power, pleasure?”

“As veils, or illusions which keep you from seeing the great and glorious light of truth—soap-bubbles, glistening and beautiful to the eye, but absolutely empty.”

“Do you not suffer at separation from friends here?”

“There is no separation. We are all one—all closely and indissolubly united—and that one includes what is in your world as well as worlds upon worlds, far, far, beyond my power of imagination—all that is, or was, or ever shall be. Sometimes death unites us more closely than ever to those still upon earth.”

“Does not the spirit sometimes faint with fear, when it first becomes aware that it has left the body forever?”

“It was not so with me. I was prepared. During my long illness I thought much of the future, knowing that the end of what you call life was near. In my mind I dropped the robe of flesh without regret, feeling that annihilation or anything that set me free from pain would be welcome. When at last I found that the silver—(otherwise the electrical) cord—was loosened and the body left behind, the experience seemed natural. True, it was not without awe, but that feeling of awe arose from the light and beauty, the newness and yet the familiarity of that on which I had entered. Yet it is not all new, for we still have the old, but understand it better—we see it with more comprehensive eyes—from a larger and higher outlook.”

“Is there anything there to depress or sadden you?”

“To depress me, no; yet something akin to oppression I sometimes feel, because of the vastness, the immensity, the endlessness of everything. Doubtless you experience the same feeling often, when you look up at the stars and the mind is staggered and shrinks back upon itself at the majesty and grandeur of creation. But do not forget that the experiences of no two souls are exactly alike here, any more than on earth. That which this state of consciousness means to us, or holds for us, depends upon the degree of enlightenment we have attained before entering

it—upon our mental, moral and spiritual attitude, our aspirations and desires—or character, or in short on what we have become.”

“Can you make things there, as here—shape things out of crude material, I mean?”

“We have no crude material. We have to do only with the finer forces. With us the idea creates. We form the idea, and lo! it immediately *is*. We think, and the thought takes visible form. Wonderful as this may seem to you, it is nevertheless as true of your world as of this, only the method is slower. The idea is always the true creation, but to make it objective you must give it form with the hands, out of material substance. The imagination is the creative realm.”

“Have we each a guardian angel?”

“Yes; every soul has a guide or helper, who ever works to incline one to good, and away from evil, yet leaves the will free. You, yourself, not he, must make the decisions. He suggests, but does not lead.”

“Who is my guardian angel?” Cartice asked.

“Who could he be if not one who loves you?”

Once only Louis Doring came. He was the same as when here, full of self and empty of all else. Cartice did not encourage him to come again, feeling the distance between them to be greater than ever,—a distance measured by an absence of sympathy, which is the only distance

known to the soul. After uttering some of the flavorless nothings which ever characterized his conversation, he went and came no more.

Chrissalyn's great dread, frequently expressed, was that her husband or some of her near kindred might come. As long as none of her own household came, Planchette did not seem uncanny; but again and again she declared that if any one of them came she would be wretched for the rest of her life. Colonel Layton did not respect her wish, however. One night he took her unawares, as it were. Giving Planchette a peculiar spin, he wrote his name as characteristically as he had ever done in life. When Chrissalyn saw the signature, she burst into uncontrollable sobbing, and begged him to go away.

Cartice consoled her, and implored her to let him remain, while she talked a few moments with him, and this at last Mrs. Layton consented to do.

"Don't cry, Chriss," he wrote. "I knew you didn't want me to come; but I wish to tell you that I am better here than there, just as you are far better without me. So it is well as it is. I was a poor devil there for a fact; but I'm on the up-grade here."

Chrissalyn wept afresh, but heroically went on, and the Colonel wrote:

"Mrs. Doring, why didn't you attend my funeral?"

Cartice looked aghast, the question, at first blush, being so extraordinary. At some length she explained that she was too ill to go. Evidently reading her unspoken thought, he wrote:

“Yes, I was present—the real I as well as the silent image of me in the box. I looked around at my leisure, and saw everybody there. I wondered at your absence, you and Chriss being such close friends. Besides, you were always nice to me, too, God bless you!”

At this tribute to her kindness from beyond the grave Cartice dropped a grateful tear. The Colonel's nature had something childlike and sweet in it, in spite of its many defects. Most of his faults had been of a peevish and childish order.

“Thank you, Colonel Layton,” Cartice answered. “I am glad to hear from you.”

“Mrs. Doring, do you remember the conversation I had with you an hour or so before I made the final journey?”

“Perfectly.”

“I sang about death being a narrow sea that divides your world from the land of pure delight. Well, it's a very narrow sea—so narrow we can step across. In fact it isn't a sea at all, for the two worlds are not really divided. They only seem to be.”

Several times Mrs. Layton's friend, Jessie, came. When asked whether she threw flowers

at her own funeral, she said she did; that she knew beforehand that Chriss had the faculty of seeing certain things others could not, and had it in mind before she went away that she would do something to prove that death was only an illusion.

Cartice's great grandfather, who died before she was born, came and wrote his name in full, which she did not herself know. He told things pertaining to the family, which she afterward verified, among them being the name of the political party to which he belonged, and which had long been extinct. His handwriting was of an older style, and he wrote with a deliberation uncommon in the present day.

Some communications purported to come from North American Indians, mighty chiefs and stalwart braves with great dignity of manner and imposing names. After a time, however, Cartice inclined to the opinion that both the manner and the names were masks used to conceal identities that did not wish to be known. They spoke in the figurative style attributed to gifted red men, and for the most part their messages were interesting and instructive.

Once when Mrs. Doring was very tired and discouraged one of them wrote:

"Is it not a pleasure to the squaw to convince the braves and old men that she teaches many truths? She must not let the ink dry in her

horn, for she can carry many braves with her in the councils."

Again, apparently overhearing the two investigators of psychic law talk of some poor, pitiful, hide-bound persons who found fault with everybody that did not revolve within their pint-measure orbit, this same Red Feather, as he called himself, wrote with emphatic force:

"Be not tied by the ways of others. The eagle cannot fly with the wings of a chicken."

One evening Prescott wrote a few minutes and then excused himself from further work, saying that something had just occurred which made him too nervous to write.

His two friends looked at each other in speechless astonishment. Here was a mystery beyond other mysteries. Too nervous? Were not nerves but parts of the body, destined to dust with the rest of it?

Evidently understanding their amazement, he added this line after a moment's pause:

"Incredible as it may seem to you, I still have nerves."

Once when Chrissalyn was peevish and dissatisfied, she said she had a mind to give up fooling with Planchette; that it was scary and risky, and there was no telling what was at the bottom of its queer doings. Prescott came like a flash to the rescue, fearful that she would put her threat into execution, and so cut off communication entirely.

“O Butterfly, dear, don’t do that! Please don’t, for my sake,” he pleaded, with an earnestness that touched their hearts. “You do not appreciate this grand, beautiful privilege, which to me is so precious. Who, besides you can do this—converse freely with friends so far away that the railroad has never been made that can reach them?”

Somewhat mollified by his pathetic tribute to her extraordinary psychic gifts, she grumbled that for his sake she wouldn’t give up Planchette. He continued:

“Had I known as much about the unknown future, when on earth, as you do, I should have thought myself wise, indeed.

“It astonishes me now to remember that I ever doubted the persistence of the individual, the continuousness of life. Fools who think themselves savants will tell you to have nothing to do with spirits, not to encourage them to come back, as that interferes with their progression, and other rubbish of the same sort. Such persons know nothing of the laws of progress here. The two worlds—in fact all worlds—are one and the same. Your best interests and ours are identical. There is no differentiation. Frequently our work lies entirely with you. What higher mission could one have than to cheer and strengthen the disheartened and fainting ones of earth? We help you, and you in turn often help us.

What would you think of a friend who told you never to come and visit him, but to go on and progress by yourself? Well, spirits are simply human beings living under conditions as yet not understood by you. Many of them are your friends, whom you would not dream of treating discourteously while they were with you visibly. The pupils of your schools go from grade to grade. Those of the highest grade are not prohibited from contact with those of the primary, if they wish it, and often they return there as teachers. The division between your world and ours only exists for those not yet far enough developed to understand its non-existence. It is not real, but only an appearance. It exists only in the consciousness of those ignorant of the great law of oneness which is operative everywhere. And this is true of many things that seem very real to you. They only exist in your consciousness. Also that which is not within your consciousness has no existence for you whatever. We are one—all the peoples of all universes, and all are moving upward into light by means of the process called evolution, which is the unfolding and perfecting of man, who is spirit, not clay."

"Are we ever reborn into this world?"

"I am told that rebirth is one of the many methods open to the soul for progression."

"Can you see our future in this world?"

“Some have this faculty. I have not. They only see the main incidents, as a traveler, looking from a high hill, sees a guide-post ahead in the valley.”

“Are we ever entirely alone?”

“Never. There is always the cloud of witnesses of which Paul spoke.”

A stranger came sometimes whose character was of an antique mould. He gave no name, but others, when questioned about him, said he had been one of the great of earth, and also one of the good—none greater since Jesus.

“What is the soul of man?” Cartice asked him.

“Can any one comprehend God?” was his reply.

“I do not understand,” she persisted.

“Eternal being mirrors itself in every existence—is every existence. When you know that indefinable, illimitable, deathless and divine manifestation called the soul, you will know God, for in the one is imaged or reflected the other. Remember, eternal being is the background of every existence.”

Looking at these words fresh from an intelligence whose habitation earthly eye hath not seen, Cartice Doring thrilled with a strange joy, in sympathetic vibration with the wave of truth that touched her spirit. For one hallowed moment the great gates opened and she saw a light more

beautiful than the light of the morning, more glorious than the light of many suns, softer, brighter, more beatific than was ever on sea or land, for lo ! she saw the reflection of the soul itself, and understood its infinite source and deathless destiny. In that ineffable moment she knew that it never had birth and never should know death, and that separateness was not of it, nor was it divisible from aught there is, and difference there was none. On the bosom of eternal being it rested secure through a thousand illusions.

The key that unlocked all mysteries was revealed by a flash of the soul's own light. Pale and trembling she bent her head till it lay on the written words of the nameless stranger, and closed her eyes that she and the great white light might be alone together.

Thousands of years ago an Indian sage, when parting from his wife, said : " We do not love the husband in the husband, nor the wife in the wife, nor the children in the children. What we love in them, what we truly love in everything is the divine spirit, (the eternal atman, the immortal and absolute self) "—and as we should add, says Max Müller, the immortal God, for the immortal self and the immortal God must be one.

Life's boundless extension and endless progression was ever the uppermost thought in Mrs. Doring's mind. In it she found consolation for

all ills, as well as explanation of them. She pitied those still blind to this tremendous fact. What had they to uphold them in the terrible conflict we make of life?

What of the literature that only reaches the grave and there halts, unable to go further? Is it not the literature of children, useful only to amuse and entertain them in idle hours? She had adored the art of letters, had made a fetich of it, paying homage to its great names and walking in its fair gardens with reverent steps. Now she asked herself what literature had done for the voiceless army of the dead. What representation had they in its pages? The dead, the sacred dead, the beloved dead, what had letters done to bridge the stream that separates them from the living?

Poets had sent them to a far-off heaven or plunged them into a flaming hell to suit their moods and meters. Romancers had used them as spectres to come upon the scene at inopportune moments and treat their readers to thrills. They were flippantly spoken of as "spooks," "ghosts," "apparitions," and "supernatural appearances." They were good stock in certain brands of stories which nobody believed in, and occasionally they were allowed to have a bit of business on the stage. Witless witlings had sneered at their claims to recognition, and writers of many minds, however they differed on other points, were gen-

erally united in the effort to keep the dead, one and all, from rising.

Authors of romances found death a convenience in disposing of inconvenient characters of their own creation. When they could not manage them effectively any other way, they slaughtered them remorselessly, and that was the end of them; that put them out of both writers' and readers' way for all time. Not even the good always escaped this doom. If readers could be entertainingly harrowed and wrought upon by the demise of the most angelic heroine, she had to die, and that finished her for friends and foes. At the grave everything ended. There love laid its treasures and turned hopelessly away; and there hate sheathed its poniard in satisfaction, having reached its extreme limit.

Now Cartice Doring saw clearly that there are no finalities here; that the grave is not the end; that it never imprisoned a human soul. She saw that a new literature must come forth to satisfy minds of larger growth, which look upon death, not as a finality, but a change of costume and the opening of a new act. And this literature must go to the point, straight and clear; it must seek the solution of life's problem and not merely amuse and beguile travelers on the journey.

Many a night, while she walked home after an evening's talk with her unseen friends, she felt in touch with all the universe. Nothing was far

off, not even the stars, which looked down upon earth with tender human sympathy in their bright faces. She feared nothing, and knew no loneliness, feeling herself attended by an innumerable company. Already she believed that what Kant said will yet be proved, "that the human soul, even in this life, is by an indissoluble communion connected with all the immaterial natures of the spirit world, acting upon them, and receiving impressions from them."

Now she understood more clearly the meaning of this statement by our greatest philosopher, Emerson: "every man is an inlet to the Divine mind and to all of that mind." Yes, and an outlet, also.

Now, now she began to see that "the spirit of man is a personal limitation of the supreme spirit," as another philosopher says; that "God is the all of man's life, the power of man at bottom being the power of God."

Now she could understand that "what we call the material universe is but the manifestation of infinite Deity to our finite minds"; and that "our individual self is found," as the ancient wisdom of the East, and likewise Jesus and Paul, affirms, "included in the contents of the Absolute Being or Self."

"Eternal Being mirrors itself in every existence," she murmured reverently; "Eternal Being, and we are it."

The pulsing, eager, feverish life of the city was stilled. Its people slept, at least they were asleep to the truth, and refused to be awakened. Thousands of Ephraims, joined to their idols, dwelt contentedly in their fools' paradise, asking to be let alone. And what were those idols? Mists of their own creation, perishable and unreal—for nothing endures, nothing is real but being, Eternal Being. Like the wayward sons and daughters of old Jerusalem, they will not be gathered under the wing of even divine wisdom.

The old dreams of childhood came back, with their perplexing reminiscence of life in a land remote in the past, whose people knew not misery.

Had she lived before? Yes, always. How could it be otherwise with Eternal Being as the background, the source and centre of her existence? For this there was neither beginning nor end. Was she not an indestructible part of all that is, was and ever shall be? Behind her was no birth; before her no death. These were but "world-fictions."

And what was she? One of the millions of conscious atoms that make up the great whole—a woman walking the path alone, with a dash of genius, original, creative, commanding, it was said, and a force of will and character that made her respected and conspicuous among other atoms. Whence came the genius and the force of character? From the infinite ocean of intelli-

gence and creative energy—from the one source and the one force. Why had she gifts and qualities others had not? Because she had reached upward toward the light; she had aspired, and as a consequence had expanded and grown. She had mirrored more of the supreme intelligence than many others, because she had desired it and had held her mind receptive to it.

All her life at times she had been a prey to a deep dissatisfaction. An unspoken unrest, a profound melancholy lay beneath her sunniest hours, and she had experienced a yearning of the soul for that which perhaps no mortal ever attains.

But now in these nights when she walked alone under the stars, illumined within by the light of truth, there were moments when her spirit vibrated in unison with the great spirit or self of the universe, and she was satisfied. She saw humanity, like a mighty river rolling slowly to the sea, each drop blending with others, and all impelled by a resistless force that bore them onward, they knew not whence nor whither. This river was rolling toward the ocean of truth, there to enjoy the freedom which was its divine destiny, and which each atom or drop could only reach by recognizing, living and becoming the truth.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE SIMPLE WAY.

“Life, with all it yields of joy and woe and hope and fear,
Is just our chance o’ the prize of learning love,
How love might be, hath been, indeed, and is.”

—*Robert Browning.*

TALKING with Gabriel Norris one day, Mrs. Doring could not refrain from telling him some of her astonishing psychic experiences.

“I have long known,” he said, “that they whom we call dead are more alive than we are. I, too, have talked with them. Like St. Paul I am a spiritualist, a word which generally excites fear and horror in unenlightened minds. I preach spiritualism, plain and pure, but I don’t name it. Sometimes it is best not to label one’s knowledge. It only prejudices the ignorant against it, and builds a fence around one’s own mind as well as around one’s neighbor’s. A name is a limitation. That’s one reason why I cannot work in any organization. I keep my spirit free, ever ready to absorb more truth, and I preach a free gospel, which, like all things else is susceptible to the influence of new light. Truth is not all revealed to any man. Little by little one learns to know a greater degree of it, and so grows more and more

free from error. What is evolution but a gradual growing out of darkness into light? The proof that we live again is of tremendous importance, because with it comes the knowledge that every thought as well as every deed helps in the building of our souls and our eternal destiny. That we shall live always is a fact in nature, but in what estate depends upon ourselves, upon our thoughts, aspirations and efforts, for man is the expression, or sum, of his desires. Here or elsewhere they shall be realized."

Gabriel wished he might have the great pleasure of a word with Prescott, whom he loved. Chrissalyn granted permission, and he went one evening to see the wonders of Planchette. Prescott obligingly came, and when Gabriel, with tears shining in his eyes asked if he had any particular message for him, answered:

"Only to thank you for your good words about me in the church, when I could not speak for myself."

Gabriel had been one of several friends, orthodox and unorthodox, who made brief addresses at Prescott's funeral, which, by the grace of a liberal-minded and great-hearted minister, was held in a church, in spite of the fact that the dead editor was a bold unbeliever.

At these grateful words the eyes of the gentle preacher glistened and his voice wavered with feeling, as he said: "You deserved all the praise

I gave you. You did your best. You spoke truth and lived truth as you saw it. None can do more."

In saying this Gabriel unconsciously raised his voice higher and higher till he ended in a shout, so natural was it to think of Prescott as far off because he was out of sight.

"Thank you again, Gabriel," he wrote; "but let me tell you, that although I used to be a little deaf, I hear perfectly well now."

Gabriel laughed heartily as it dawned upon him that he had been shouting at his invisible friend, and thought Prescott must be laughing too.

"Are all cured of their physical defects over there?" Gabriel asked.

"Not immediately, for illness or wholeness is a matter of the consciousness, and that cannot be completely changed at once. It is all progression, growth, expansion, but it takes what you call time to effect it. There is plenty of work for you, Gabriel, here as well as there."

"I am glad of that," said the unordained preacher. "An idle heaven would be hell for me. Man's desire for action and his pleasure in it are strong evidence of his immortality. Were death—extinction—his destiny, somehow he would have known it, and would have been indolent instead of busy. It is true that much of his work is impermanent and useless or worse than use-

less ; but it is the effort he puts forth, the exercise of will, that is the valuable part of it. That which he is really building through all his blundering and the only part of his work that endures, is character."

"Truth, Gabriel ! You speak immortal truth," Prescott wrote. "Now, good-night."

"Do you really believe you have been talking with Gordon Prescott ?" Cartice asked.

"Yes," said Gabriel, simply. "I could not prove it to others ; neither can I prove that a letter is from the person whose name is signed to it, without his personal affirmation, and even that is only valuable in proportion to his reputation for truth-telling. Most of what we call proofs of anything is flimsy and fallible."

"I want to tell you, Mr. Norris," said Cartice, speaking with feeling, "that I owe you far more than you are aware of. You first gave me light, and you were a mascot for me, besides, in worldly success. Through meeting you the tide of my fortune, the day I met you, turned from ebb to flow. The drawing I made of you opened the door of opportunity for me. But giving me light was the greatest service. That day, in your lecture at the market house you told us we were not here simply to be happy ; that happiness as we pictured it, was not the purpose of existence ; that we were here to learn and to grow to the perfection nature intended, as a plant or a tree

grows. In other words, we are to unfold from the seed and express our true being. Up to that time, like everybody else, I had made the hunt for happiness my chief aim. When, in consequence of that, I found myself swamped in misery, I considered myself injured, and felt sure somebody was to blame. I could not see that I, myself, was the culprit; that the selfish search for happiness must lead directly away from that condition. Ah, I suffered much, much up to that time; but I see the uses of it now. I was being educated by the only means possible. Had I secured the kind of happiness I was looking for, I should still be in darkness. It was the ideal of an undeveloped mind. Now I see plainly that the spiritual side of suffering is good. It means birth—the birth of knowledge, of light, of truth. I don't think suffering is 'sent upon us,' as many good people assert. We pursue false ideals and they bring us to grief; but through that suffering we find the true ideals. Suffering becomes our teacher. Truth, which is good, is ever struggling to express itself through us; but in our ignorance we oppose and obstruct it, and that makes pain for us. All suffering comes from our obstinate opposition to good, though we are usually unconscious of it till our eyes are opened. I thank you again for helping me. Since that day suffering has fallen away from me to a great extent. As soon as I became willing to suffer in

order to get on the right road, I ceased to suffer. Strange law, but true. And so I argue that when we cease to pursue happiness or think about it we shall possess it."

"Yes, it has long been clear to me that we are not here to hunt happiness; though I doubt not that every human soul is destined to be happy; but it will be an order of happiness most unlike the common dream. Even here it could be found, if we sought it where the master told us to look. Did he not say that the kingdom of heaven is within us? It is a state of consciousness. He told us how to attain it, too. How simple the way! Only to love one another. This, indeed would make heaven for us all. That is what we are here to learn—that is the chief end of man, for, when we learn that, we shall know all the law—all there is to learn, and shall have reached the full development which is the purpose of our existence. How simple the way! We have no call to go forth and reform our erring brother; to devise schemes to save his soul; to build barriers to put temptation out of his way; to weave nets to ensnare him to our faith. We have only to love him. Thus shall we fulfill all the law; thus shall we do all we have to do. Neither are we here to do good. Even this is not our work in life. Many well-meaning people busy themselves, and bluster about doing good, from their point of view. Oftener than not they put their

Father's house in disorder. We are to *be* good. Then the doing of good comes without effort. We are here but for one purpose, and that is to learn and therefore grow. To learn that we are the sons and daughters of God—otherwise supreme wisdom, love, life, light and intelligence. The more we recognize this infinite source of our being the more of it we reflect and become, the more perfect our development. And how shall we do this? In the simple way we were told—only by loving one another. This is the purpose of our creation. This includes all there is to know, and to become. This is the perfection at which we were told to aim. This sets our feet on the road to happiness.”

“What is the body?” Cartice asked.

“Perhaps it is the objective side of our existence on this plane—the self as it appears to others, but not as it really is.”

After Gabriel was gone Chrissalyn said with a yawn:

“Cartice, you and Gabriel tire one all out bothering about the ‘purpose of life,’ the soul and the body and so on. What’s the good of heating your heads about such things? Just to slip through easy, is all I’m asking now.”

“Yes, dear; but you are a Butterfly and have a butterfly’s standard. Gabriel and I aim to be gardeners, who make it possible for butterflies to circle about and enjoy themselves without bad

boys catching them and pulling their wings off. But you have grown astonishingly, since I first knew you, in spite of yourself. You used to find nothing better to do than kill time with a procession of admirers. Now you have outgrown that. And you were dependent on your husband for your very bread. Now you are able to stand on your own feet, and are a self-supporting, useful member of society. Don't you see, dear, that the lesson every soul must learn sooner or later, here or elsewhere, is to be able to stand alone? Each of us, woman or man, must fulfill the purpose of creation, which is to grow toward perfection, and we can't do that by leaning on somebody else. Woman is a human being as is man, and is responsible for her own destiny. The responsibility can't be put upon another."

CHAPTER XV.

IT IS WELL WITH THE CHILD.

Fair are the flowers and the children, but their subtle suggestion is fairer ;

Rare is the roseburst of dawn, but the secret that clasps it is rarer.

—*Richard Realf.*

MRS. DORING had a friend, a gentle, patient, heavily-burdened woman who lived her difficult life with the high heroism of a daughter of the gods. Though fragile as a flower she kept the wolf at bay for her little family, and nobody ever saw a cloud on her face or heard a complaint from her lips. Born and bred to the refinements of life she met adversity as only the gently bred do meet it—by taking hold of whatever work was at hand, without questioning whether it was what is miscalled menial or not.

When her baby girl was born she begged Car-tice to name her, which she did, giving her the name of the little sister who had died when she herself was a child—Isabel. To her mother's great delight she grew to resemble Mrs. Doring as though of her flesh and blood, and loved her in the same degree. Now she was nearly three years old, bright and winsome, with never a day's illness in her record.

But a fever came, and behind that stood the last enemy, who, however often routed, is sure to return sometime and win the battle. This was the time of his victory. In the night, when all was silent without, and solemn within, he came. Cartice had the baby in her arms in the last precious, awesome moments. The wasted little hand reached up and silently stroked her face, and the soft, dark eyes, unearthly large and earnest, looked at her with unutterable love. Something else, too, was in their speechless depths—a message not easy to translate, but it brought comfort. Then, that mysterious thing, the breath, which connects us with the universal life principle, ceased; the cold white veil dropped down, and little Isabel was dead.

After holding the silent form close to her heart a moment, Cartice laid it gently on the bed, and the two mother hearts so sorely bereft stood silent but tearless beside it.

Later, when it was ready for its bed in the bosom of the earth, and again together they looked down at its white silence, Cartice said:

“She shall know no evil thought; she shall do no evil deed; she shall tread no evil path. It is well with the child.”

“Yes, in spite of my sore heart, it is well,” said the mother. “I surrender her not to death, but to a larger life, and shall not mourn. No

matter what comes, she is safe. My darling's safe—safe and dead. Since her father's death I have been troubled at times with fears for her future. I face the inevitable—a few months more here, and then—the end. For the two boys I have arranged. They will have homes and care, but it would have tried my courage to leave this one ewe lamb.”

“I would have been a mother to Isabel had you gone first,” said Mrs. Doring.

“I am sure of that; but you, too, may not tarry here long. Why should we ever worry about the future? In spite of all our planning and troubling all is managed by a higher hand. We have only to do the work of the hour, leaving what the next may bring to be met when it comes, and not in anticipation. The present alone concerns us. By living it aright the future takes care of itself. It is the thought for to-morrow that so often makes to-day gloomy. I distressed myself about my child's future, yet, see, all is well with her.”

“I thank God for what I have learned of the mysterious event called death,” said Mrs. Doring. “Yet there are people who ask what good can come of knowing such things. What good? Is it nothing to know that the little image lying here is not our Isabel but her earthly investiture; that she is not dead nor separated from us; that her life is to go on from grace to grace, from strength to strength? Is it nothing to know that

Socrates, Plato, Swedenborg, Shakespeare, Emerson, Hugo, Morse, Fulton, all who have given the world the light of genius, have never died, and that this baby is equal heir with them to a life of vaster opportunities and greater blessings?"

"Others," said Mrs. Benton, "wonder what good there is in the coming and going of so tiny a soul, who was here but for a day as it were. Yet her little life is as important in the divine plan as that of the greatest sage. She brought the gospel of pure love with her, and we are the better because of her brief visit to us—for it was but a pause on the great journey."

On the evening after the discarded visible part of the child had been put out of sight, as Mrs. Doring was returning home from her friend's house, two elderly men on the horse-car were talking of life, and their verdict was that they were tired of it.

One said it was an empty experience which he would not go through again for any consideration. The other said he had had a good time, had got as much pleasure out of life as any one, but that was all over now; he was getting old and full of aches and pains, and found no fun in living any more. The jumping off place had to be reached some day, and that would put an end to it.

His friend said that was the rub—the leap in

the dark. For his part he was disgusted with life, but abhorred death. He saw no good in either one or the other, and was inclined to believe that we are all victims of a tremendous cheat. If he could see anything to look forward to beyond a damp bed in the ground he could go on all right, but nobody knew anything about it—not even those who earned their bread talking about it in pulpits. They said they believed certain things, but they didn't know any more than other folks. He wanted solid information.

The other tossed his head to show his indifference to the subject. He said it was something he had never thought about at all in his good times, and now he guessed he wouldn't bother with it for his few remaining days.

Thus was the most important question that faces man disposed of by one whose opinion on any topic pertaining to commercial or political interests would be received with respect by his fellow townsmen and have weight with them. But both he and his friend had lived to venerable years without ever learning what they themselves were. Of that knowledge, which includes all other knowledge, they were as ignorant as earth worms. They had acquired what is miscalled education; had been factors in public affairs, and figures in social life, and yet never learned that they were not bodies to go to pieces some day like a broken machine, but spirits, with a life whose issues are

spiritual and eternal, not material and perishable. To one, life had meant a chance to have a good time; to the other emptiness, because he had had no good time. Neither dreamed that its meaning is in the unseen, not in the seen,—in what they had become, not what they possessed or enjoyed. They lived in dense spiritual darkness, yet knew it not, and they were but two out of millions in the same condition.

Hearing their pathetic though unconscious confession of ignorance, Mrs. Doring wondered if little Isabel's short, loving, trusting life was not more complete than theirs of long years full of impermanent and illusory importance. She wished she could tell them what she had learned of life and its meaning and future, but, alas! she had already been stoned and knew the danger of letting her light shine before those who had not become as little children—receptive, willing to learn.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE STORY OF ONE RETURNED FROM THE DEAD.

“Is it wonderful that I should be immortal, as every one is immortal? I know it is wonderful, but my eye-sight is equally wonderful, and how I was conceived in my mother’s womb is equally wonderful.”—*Walt Whitman*.

Thought in the mind hath made us.
What we are
By thought was wrought and built.
If a man’s mind
Hath evil thoughts, pain comes on him as comes
The wheel the ox behind.

All that we are is what we thought and willed;
Our thoughts shape us and frame.
If one endure
In purity of thought joy follows him
As his own shadow sure.—*Sir Edwin Arnold*.

MRS. DORING had read that the people of the unseen world, or other invisible intelligent beings, sometimes condescended to write on slates under certain conditions. As she now believed that Chrissalyn possessed all the psychic gifts, she bought a slate and used her most artful eloquence to persuade her friend to experiment. The capricious creature consented after fishing up objections enough to make her acquiescence received with great gratitude. This was her innocent way of making her services valuable and

herself important. But for love of her friend, and also no doubt for love of Prescott, who was the only person on the other side of silence that she cared to hear from, apparently, or at least was not afraid of, she finally consented.

Not knowing the correct manner of procedure they could do no more than experiment blindly, till they learned something about it. They held the slate under the table till their arms were all tired out and got nothing. Then they laid it on the table, and becoming interested in talking, forgot all about it and their experiment, till they heard a soft, rapid scratching.

Looking down simultaneously, they saw an incredible thing. The tiny pencil, no bigger than a grain of rice, was writing, though no visible hand guided it, and this was its message :

"Each soul is its own redeemer, here, hereafter and forever."

The two spectators looked at each other in awe-struck silence. From whom this came they knew not, for the one that wrote it wrote nothing more. But for their familiarity with communications from the silent majority they would have been sore afraid. As it was they were awed by this extraordinary evidence of the nearness of unseen beings presumably like themselves.

Talking about it they sat there till the evening was nearly spent. At last, Chrissalyn idly laid

her hand on the slate, and almost immediately it began to throb or vibrate curiously, like a living thing. Startled, she removed her hand, and instantly the throbbing ceased. Turning the slate over they found the under side written full in a feminine hand of exquisite daintiness, and signed with the name of one of our most eminent women, one who has been dead nearly a century.

The message had not been written after the manner of the previous one, for there was no scratching or sound of the movement of the pencil. In fact, as they soon discovered, the pencil was not there at all. The method, whatever it may have been, was instantaneous, like telegraphy. A few seconds of vibration in the slate and lo! it was there. If thought could be photographed the process might be like this. It was as though some one had thought the message, and the mere act of thinking had made it visible on the slate.

“Chriss, you are the most wonderful being in the world,” said Cartice, reverently, “and you don’t know it. You have all the occult gifts, yet value none of them.”

The Butterfly flushed with gratification at the generous praise of her friend who usually praised or blamed with miserly care. Beyond the fact that they made her important in Cartice’s eyes she cared nothing for the mysteries revealed

through her. Being a butterfly, she was not afflicted with any particular craving for knowledge. The world and the things of the world satisfied her.

This was what the slate contained :

“To you, Cartice Hill Doring, I bring this message. Remember it well, for I may never come again: Till the soil, and you will be prosperous. Till what you have. Make more of your talents. Concentrate all your thoughts and devote more time to your special one. If you are really anxious to make a success of yourself, you must use every moment. You not only owe it to yourself, but to the whole world, and God, who has endowed you with this wonderful gift. You are a woman among a million. It is certainly a wonderful gift you possess, and it is sad that you have not already made more of it. So try now. Wait not for some one to open the way. Make your own way. You can do it better than any one else. Work in order to be great; then you can rest, and it will be so delightful to rest with sweet laurels.”

Mrs. Doring read this aloud, astonished at its flattering import and amazed that so many words, all as legible as the clearest typography, could be put upon the tiny slate. The writing was a work of the most exquisite art.

“What does she mean by your special talent?” asked Chrissalyn.

“A bit of my brain garden which I have scarcely cultivated at all, and would rather not name, for I never have been sure of my title to it. In my early dreams it figured conspicuously; but of late years I have almost dropped it from my thoughts. The business of bread-winning pushes many a fair dream out of its sacred niche. In spite of the encouraging words of this message I doubt if I shall ever till that soil. I begin to feel too tired to make new departures. The torpor of indifference and weariness is creeping over me. The old spirit of action walks with a halting step, and turns its eyes longingly to the meadows of ease and indolence. I think I understand how car-horses feel. They know perfectly well that, whatever may happen to the rest of the world, for them there is only a steady, day-after-day pull till the end comes. Prescott used to say I wanted to eat my cake and have it too; but he didn't know how feeble and weary I often was.”

One evening when they called their unseen friends new wonders were shown them—wonders which took place under laws beyond their penetration. The Butterfly wore a fresh white rose on her breast. When Prescott announced himself, his first words were of its beauty and fragrance.

“Can you see it?” Cartice asked.

“Certainly.”

"And smell it?"

"Of course. Give it to me, Butterfly! Give it to me," he wrote, with eager energy.

"Well, take it," said Chrissalyn, smiling at the impossible request.

"I am in earnest. I really want it. Hold it in your hand directly in front of you, and see me take it."

Laughing at what she believed to be a bit of pleasantry, she took the rose from her breast, and held it between her thumb and finger, saying, in mimicry of the old-time heroine of novels, "Please accept this token of my esteem."

Instantly, quicker than a flash, with a suddenness indescribable, it disappeared, vanished completely, in the sight of both pairs of eyes. Whither? Could vacant space swallow a tangible object? Impossible. Yet this impossibility was accomplished.

The fact stunned them. Each looked in the face of the other, and clasped the other's hand to make sure they were not dreaming.

"I should be frightened speechless if any one else than Prescott had done that," said the Butterfly, pallid and trembling.

"Let us ask him about it," said Cartice, who was shaken, too.

With some reluctance, Chrissalyn asked Prescott how he had taken the rose.

"By means of what some of your scientific

people call the Fourth Dimension of Space," he replied.

"Can you explain it more clearly?"

"No; I have no terms in which to make it plain to you. It is all natural enough, however, and comes under a law as yet not known to your world. Now wait a moment and I will bring you a flower by means of the same law."

Silent and expectant they sat for three or four minutes. Then, apparently out of the air above their heads, two large fresh, red roses fell on the table before them. Examination proved that they were real and not illusory.

"Where did you get them?" Cartice asked.

"I went what you would call a long distance for them,—about two hundred miles; but it is nothing to me, for I know no distance outside of my own thought."

Unsolicited, one evening Prescott volunteered to tell his two faithful friends some of his experiences since passing out of their sight. He wrote with a rapidity and energy even greater than in life, though he had ever a nervous, hasty manner of writing, which was his true form of expression. In conversation he had little ability. He consumed three evenings in the task he had set himself, and this was his story, which was addressed to Cartice:

"There was the accident at the elevator. It

occurred in a few seconds of time, but I did not realize what was taking place. A thought that something was going wrong flashed through my mind, but it conveyed no sense of danger. I was like a spectator who sees disaster overtake another, yet has no clear idea what that disaster is. From this and what I have learned here, I am inclined to the belief that victims of accidents which result in sudden death have no painful experiences—do not even suffer from fear.

“As you know, I was killed instantly—that is pushed out of life as you understand life, without warning. When I awoke, or regained consciousness, on this side of death—which I believe was soon after the accident, though I am not sure on this point—I found myself groping blindly, staggering weakly in the dark and reaching about me with my hands to find something that would help me to a knowledge of my whereabouts.

“I was never distinguished for patience. Now I began to feel impatient and cross at finding myself in such an unaccountable situation. Then the darkness got thicker, more depressing, and at last terrible, until my spirit quailed before it, and the thought came to me that I was indeed, in a place and condition strange and fearful.

“Then I thought of you, Cartice, and of how devotedly I loved you. With that thought came light, such radiant, phenomenal, overpowering

light that it dazzled me. I shuddered before its awful effulgence, and put my hands over my eyes that it might not blind me. My love for you seemed to fill all space and include all things. While enjoying it, drinking it in, floating in it, I moved on, for I was walking,—or so it seemed—until I met my dear old friend William Bissell.

“That astonished me, for I instantly remembered that he had died five years before, and I had been one of those selected for the solemn honor of carrying his body to the grave. Was I dreaming?

“He came toward me smiling. I thought I had never seen him look so well, so handsome, so young or so benignant. He was ever the soul of kindness, not only ready but always anxious to serve others; and he had a particular fondness for meeting friends at the railroad station when they came back to the city after an absence—especially those who had no near kindred to welcome them.

“‘I’m glad to see you, Gordon,’ he said; but I thought I saw something in his face more than the words implied, and a foreboding of unwelcome news came to me.

“‘How is this, William?’ I asked. ‘Am I dreaming? I thought I helped to bury you five years ago.’

“He smiled significantly and said, ‘Has it

not occurred to you that somebody may be arranging to do the same service for you?’

“‘What do you mean, William?’ I asked, calling upon my soul to sustain me against the shock of the reply.

“‘Well, Gordon,’ he said, gently, kindness making his face shine like a lamp, ‘tell me if a dead man’s arm has any bones in it?’

“Instinctively I grasped my left arm with my right hand. Lo! the hand passed through it. No bones were there.

“Can you imagine one already dead fainting from fear? The sensation I experienced was more startling, more fearful than anything I had conceived of before. I sank down, down into immeasurable depths.

“A feeling of shame at my cowardice took possession of me. Why was I afraid? I had died, to be sure; my condition was changed; but the experience was something millions and millions of other souls had undergone. Gentle, timid, delicate women had trodden that solemn path before me. Little children, too, had traveled it. Why should I, a man, vain of my strength and courage, be affrighted? A vast compassion for all humankind in this trying moment welled up in my heart, and instantly I was lifted into light, and beheld about me loving and familiar faces, beautiful vistas, and heard melodious sounds. The loving thought I held

had borne me upward ; but I did not then know it.

“Many times I sank into a dark, bottomless void, and as often by some mysterious power rose into ineffable light. I encountered massive walls from time to time, before which my feet were stayed. Impassable and impregnable, they seemed to bar my way, I knew not why. Eventually I learned that the sinking and the rising, and the barriers I met, were not external experiences, but all took place within my own consciousness, and were but the picturing or appearances of my inner condition. They were my own thoughts externalized, for *thought* is the only *thing* in the *Universe*. We think, therefore we are. Existence is thought. Man is thought made objective. Thought is the creative principle: it is creation.

“‘As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he,’ describes life both here and in the visible form, if you but understand its true significance. Here every sensation is intensified a thousand times. I thrill with joy and the universe vibrates in harmonious response. I suffer, and it trembles in reciprocal anguish. And this is true of every soul in whatever part of the universe it may dwell ; but here our capacity to feel is keener and greater than with you, and here we learn to understand. Every sensation is intensified, because we enter into closer relations with the One

Life, the One Spirit that fills all space. Everything is within our consciousness, and outside of that there is nothing. Within us is all that ever was or shall be.

“For a time I was often wretched. The interests of earth attracted me, I thought of them wistfully, and wished I were in my old place doing the work in which I had found something akin to pleasure. The wish held me there, and I was miserable, because the old methods of action were lost to me. Often when you sat at your desk in the *Register* office I was near, suffering keen torment, because I could not make my presence known. It took me a long time to see that we were not really separated. It was only the veil of your ignorance that shut me away from you. I was near you, but you did not know it, that was all. The veil that hides our world from yours is ignorance—a veil it is possible to lift.

“Still, I suffered until I found a means of enlightening you. I saw the peculiar power the Butterfly possesses, and endeavored to arouse in her a wish to investigate which would enable me to bridge the gulf between us—a gulf that existed only in your thought.

“I caused her to see me in what she believed a dream, and I held a planchette that she might try to operate with it. To my unbounded delight I was successful. I assure you that, although you were grateful for the knowledge the little

tripod brought you, I was a thousand times more so, since to me it meant deliverance from darkness and misery.

“I could not rise into higher conditions—conditions being internal—until I had established communication with you. The moment you recognized me and believed in me, darkness and discontent began to fall away from me. You made heaven for me on earth, inasmuch as I loved you, and that love has made heaven for me here—both heaven and hell being states of consciousness, though none the less real for all that.

“My burden was lifted, when you fully understood that I still lived. Not till then was I willing to accept my changed condition and seek knowledge in new paths.

“How delightful it was to discover that I had power within myself to create conditions! Thoughts of love enveloped me in light, a light that had in it all beauty and all harmony. The character of my love for you changed. Desire for possession went out of it, and the wish to benefit and help you in every way, without regard to myself, took its place. I then learned that the more unselfish and universal our love, the deeper and fuller and sweeter our own being becomes. Love is the supreme power. Love is life. Love is light. Love is all there is, for love is God.

“This is a scientific truth and not merely a figure and phrase of religious philosophy.

“God is spirit and spirit is substance, the only substance in the universe. Men of science tell you that light is a mode of motion, and they speak truly, for it is the physical expression of pure spirit which is pure love. Spirit, which includes all worlds and all being is in perpetual motion; all that you see is but its different forms of manifestation.

“Your sun is not your source of light; it is but a reflector or transmitter of the one supreme light to the worlds of its system.

“The more we love the more of God do we become and express. Oh! if I could but tell you the joy that love brings. It can overcome all things. Where it dwells no evil can come; and it enters wherever the door is left open to receive it. It is everywhere, but, if your consciousness is unaware of it, for you it has no existence. Only recognize it and it is yours.

“I passed my life in combat. I attacked evil, fought it ruthlessly, and believed I was doing good. Yet I was only making evil important. You would laugh at the teacher who fought children in order to make them wise, wouldn't you? Evil is only ignorance—otherwise spiritual darkness, and men and women are but children in knowledge. There is but one way to eradicate evil or ignorance, and that is to make more light.

Open the understanding and let in the light. The darkness will flee before it. You remember Victor Hugo said : 'Pay schoolmasters and not soldiers.' I see now that the only way to make men better is to awaken the God or good in them ; to put higher ideals before them, and not find fault with them because they don't know all there is to know.

"Until I met you I lived a loveless life, therefore a pessimistic one. My sympathy with humankind had a narrow limit. A wrong aroused my wrath against the perpetrator of it, when it should have awakened my pity for the dark condition of his mind.

"I was conceited, intolerant, impatient, belligerent and often cruel. I went about with a lash in my hand, ready to administer upon all who did not live up to my standard. Now I see the simpler way of which we were long since told. It is to love our wayward brothers. When men learn that an injury done another injures themselves far more than the other, they will cease to be unkind.

"As a matter of course I could not give up my old ways of thinking at once. I still found myself quick to anger and ready to hate at the knowledge of offence or injury. These feelings instantly plunged me into darkness and the companionship of demons hideous to behold.

"It is so in your world also. Rage and hate

darken your mind, and bring into it hideous demons of thought ; but love fills you with light and beauty. Though your conception of love be crude and narrow, still the germ of divinity is in it, and it will brighten your way as far as its light extends. If you are faithful to truth as you see it, broader conceptions will come to you.

“I am not capable of instructing you on life here, only so far as it has revealed itself to me. Another may have different experiences and see a different outlook. Each soul is bounded by its own limitations, which expand as it advances. I am but a student, at the feet of wiser masters ; but I must give you what I see, not what they see.

“I believe the universe is electric ; that spirit operates through all nature by means of what you call electricity, in its different manifestations. The infinite mind, or what is called God, is the highest and most etherealized substance, including all else. It possesses the attributes of inherent motion and living power, and it has a centre like a great central sun, whose rays extend everywhere through a system of transmitters. We live and move and have our being in it, just as all physical life owes its existence to the sun of its system. Electricity is the servant of this central and all-inclusive mind, whose every thought is transmitted through creation by means of electrical and etheric vibration. Every thought of

yours creates a flash of electricity in your brain, which becomes a transmitter, for thought is electric. Do not forget, however, that I give this only as what appears to me.

“Life is an endless chain. To me now the mere fact of living after death seems a very small thing—but one little link in the endless chain. Dazzling heights rise before us as the soul goes on up the steeps of knowledge, where inexhaustible joys are laid up for us. Nothing counts but knowledge—knowledge of the law. Now I understand that eternal life is to know God. It takes eternal life to know him.

“When you act from the outlook of love, you will never go wrong; for truth is born of love.

“Weave well the fabric of your thought, for everything is made from it. The law of causation is inflexible. What you give you will get. Your thoughts will come back to you, bringing whatever freight of evil or good with which you sent them forth. Every time you think of a person you affect him for good or ill.

“If you sin, you will be the servant of sin. If you love good, you will be the instrument of good.

“‘God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.’

“The whole law is there. If you live the life of the spirit, you worship God because you express truth. Each man on earth, as to his real self, is as true a spirit as he ever shall be. Only

in most cases he is ignorant of that tremendous fact. Understand this and live it, and you worship God in spirit and in truth.

“Here imagination is reality. It is also the creative realm in your world. I think and will, and my thought takes form. I think of one I love, and instantly I am with that one, no matter in how remote a part of the universe he or she may be.

“I say remote, because you think of distance as real. To the soul it does not exist and never has existed. It is but the continuity of the mind—a mode of thought. I speak of minutes, yet for us there is no time. That too is but a mode of thought. I must, however, use terms comprehensible to you.

“Do I have the same form as in life? Yes.

“Do I wear clothes? I am clothed by my own thought, and so are you, but in a cruder way and by a slower process.

“Have I sight? Yes, but it is not the same as physical sight. That was for the objective life; this is for all that is related to my inner or true being and the true being of others.

“Have I the other senses as in the natural life? Yes; in a fulness and perfection undreamed of before. I have them and others unknown to you all blended in one vast consciousness which puts me in touch with all that relates to me in a manner impossible to describe.

“The senses are but avenues through which your spirit takes cognizance of its environment. Here the spirit learns that it is its own environment.

“Is communion between this world and yours beneficial to either one? (Remember there is but one world. The division is all in your thought.) Is not association with high-minded, well-instructed persons always beneficial to you; and association with the evil-minded and untaught always hurtful?

“How are human beings to know they are deathless; if the fact be not proved to them by ways within their comprehension? Can there be anything but good in learning the law of your own being, by whatever means are open to you? Not only is it beneficial, but it is the most important branch of knowledge you can study.

“Even spirit phenomena of the most rudimentary order are useful and necessary to the awakening of minds incapable of understanding higher methods of instruction. There is a primer stage in all learning.

“The same law of attraction governs intercourse between us and you that reigns throughout nature. Like attracts like. You call to you the same order of mind from here that you attract there from among the living. (In reality there is neither a here nor a there, save in your mind. All is the same.) Your habitual quality

of thought will attract its like. You will get what you give. Thus it happens that the foolish get foolish messages, and the earnest and intelligent generally receive sensible and instructive ones.

“As I divine the purposes of higher orders of beings here, they care relatively little for phenomena, and often lament much connected with phenomena; but they do care a great deal for whatever agency can reach human minds and cause them to think, even for ever so few minutes, of what is gentle, humane, kind, considerate, unselfish and affectional. These are the doors by which higher, gentler spirits reach human understandings, and by these means they exert a power far greater than is generally suspected.

“For the production of ordinary phenomena a high grade of intelligence is not necessary. You do not need a professor to teach a child its alphabet. The better developed spirits find more subtle ways of imparting knowledge, and select more advanced minds to receive it than those that are satisfied with rudimentary phenomena. But that is necessary to begin with.

“Here as on earth—remember I use a term implying locality for your better understanding, though the spirit knows no locality—all who enjoy a larger light than the multitude are anxious to share it with those less favored. By helping others into it they receive more of it themselves.

This is a law. Selfish, indeed, would be the soul who had a faith that supported him through every trial, and yet did not want others to have it. The heart's desire of every prophet, genius and savior, is to make others see as he sees that which illumines his own soul. For this cause the noblest and best have often perished—that is, given up their physical life—to perish in reality being impossible. Therefore, communion between spirits still in the body and those out of it is one of the most important means of education known—the chief occupation of some who are here.

“Toying with phenomena for the sole purpose of gratifying curiosity—mere wonder-mongering—is always to be deprecated.

“Often, as in my case, the opportunity of communicating with friends left behind sets a spirit free from his own unhappy thought-limitations. It lifts a burden from him. My desire to prove to you that I was not dead held me in bondage until I bridged the gulf. Intense love for one is always a kind of bondage. The perfect love we shall know, when the truth has freed us, is all-embracing, universal, like unto the love of God—it is the love of God.

“When I read these words of Condillac I laughed at them: ‘Though we should soar into the heavens, though we should sink into the abyss, we never go out of ourselves; it is always our thought that we perceive.’

“Now I can affirm their truth. We can never run away from ourselves. We take our own world with us wherever we go, for it is made of our thought—‘it is always our own thought that we perceive.’ We are our own thought—and the smallest insect or strongest and fiercest beast or greatest genius is no less and no more.

“In the life of the world I never knew happiness. Behind a cynical and reserved exterior I masked a restless, suffering spirit. Creation appeared a grim tragedy. This was because my inner eyes were closed, and I took the distorted shadow for the reality. I was looking at a fantastic mirror and saw only its exaggerated reflections. I ridiculed the idea of any one’s being happy in such a world. Now I know that man is destined to be happy, but his happiness is of the spirit, and can only come with spiritual development, when he knows that he is spirit, lives the life of the spirit, and so becomes free from the bonds of ignorance. This is what is meant by the truth making us free. Ignorance is the only evil there is—mere blindness to the light, though the light is always shining. When you know the truth, you become the truth, and are out of the darkness of ignorance, therefore free. This is, I am told, the ultimate destiny of the whole human race.

“Remember that God never punishes any one. He only teaches. This, the children of the world

have to learn. They, too, must eliminate punishment from their methods of dealing with the wrongdoers, otherwise the ignorant.

“A wise friend told me to cease my self-questioning and striving, and let knowledge find me. He said we have only to *let* good come to us and it will fill us. To do this we must make ourselves receptive—negative—and the spirit, the one spirit, which includes all wisdom, all love, all life, being positive, will flow into us. He said our continual striving and struggling made us positive, and therefore unreceptive. This enabled me to see a new meaning in the question, ‘Who, by searching can find out God?’

“The law is to be still—ready to receive—and let him enter.

“When I did this I emerged from suffering and darkness, and for the first time in the memory of my conscious existence felt my spirit at rest.”

CHAPTER XVII.

UPROOTING A HUMAN TREE.

A man said unto his angel:
"My spirits are fallen through,
And I cannot carry this battle:
O brother, what shall I do?"

* * * * *

Then said to the man his angel:
"Thou wavering, foolish soul,
Back to the ranks! What matter
To win or lose the whole."

—*Louise Imogen Guiney.*

THE Joys, otherwise the Hanleys, fell into financial trouble. Burton Hanley was forced to make an assignment for the benefit of his creditors. He had enough to pay every dollar he owed, and he turned it all over with an out-of-date honesty that scandalized the community.

The envious found a certain sweetness in this news. Nodding their heads knowingly, they said they guessed the Joys were about done with Joy. But this did not seem to be the case. On the evening following the assignment they were at an entertainment in the house of a friend and were the blithest guests, as they generally were.

The knowing ones said this light-heartedness was put on—a mere bluff to make others think they did not value money. As a matter of fact

it was not. They had simply forgotten all about their financial troubles in the engrossing pleasures of the hour. This enviable faculty for enjoying the present moment, unclouded by past or future shadows was largely responsible for their joyous lives. For them there was only the now. They never reasoned or philosophized about it, but just lived that way by nature.

“Wait till they have a hand-to-hand fight with Poverty,” said the knowing ones, who are often the cruel ones. “Wait till he writes his name on their clothes, their faces and their thoughts. Wait till he walks with them, sits with them, eats with them and never leaves them for an instant! Wait!” They said this in a way that made their hearers understand the waiting would not require patience.

Kinder ones sighed and said the Joys, poor souls, laughed at poverty, because they didn't know its horrors. But they were destined to better acquaintance with the dreaded spectre. Meantime they went their way rejoicing that affairs were no worse.

Lilla was so full of what she had learned through Chrissalyn of the deathlessness of herself and fellow beings, that she bubbled over like a kettle filled to the brim and boiling. What was loss of money and a contest with poverty to one who knew that Death was dead? This knowledge was of a character too fermentative to

remain bottled up within her. She went around talking of it, unmindful of the injunction not to cast pearls before swine. An enthusiast by nature, and endowed with power to carry conviction to an extraordinary degree, it is strange she did not succeed in the propaganda; but she did not. On the contrary the swine turned upon her and she was rended, like other prophets who have been guilty of similar indiscretion.

To each other some of the swine said: "Poor Lilla Joy. Burton's failure has upset her after all. Talks about nothing but souls. Thinks she has had proof of dead folks being alive. It's too bad."

But Lilla refused to be cast down. After a time she gave up the hopeless work of letting her light shine too far, it is true, but she kept her strangely happy face and joyous ways—kept them through many a dark day, on many a stony road—kept them to the end. She met all things, troublous or pleasant, as Socrates said he wished to meet the gods—with a bright face.

This never-changing brightness made an impression on everybody who beheld it. One might feebly describe it by saying that her soul seemed too large and too happy for its mortal measure, and was always running over.

Perhaps the office boy of the *Register* hit it most felicitously, when he thus described her to Cartice, who had been out, when she called one

day: "It was that lady who comes often and always looks as if she had just heard good news." Mrs. Doring recognized the word photograph of Lilla Joy at once.

There are times in the lives of all when new departures are imminent, when a change is impending and obligatory, yet is slow to define itself. There is the feeling that other paths must be entered, but to the outer eye they are unblazed.

Such a time had come to Cartice Doring. She had long felt its approach, but knew not the end to which it pointed. Something more than impulse stirred within her. The Spirit of Destiny itself spoke the inexorable command to move on.

Whither? "Move on." This was the only answer, for Destiny has a way of making us choose our roads, though for the most part the various whips within and without which play upon us seem to make the matter of choice largely a thing of name only. We do what we can rather than what we wish. This should give us a grain of comfort on dark days by relieving us of regrets, and settling us in the conviction that we are no more and no less than that which we must be. Even though our own nature be the compelling and directing force, we are none the less servants to its dicta. Call that which rules us by whatever name we choose, how supreme is the sway!

Looking over the situation Mrs. Doring summed up the reasons for making a change. First, she was not doing her best; she was letting down a little all the time, and that clearly was degeneration. Pleasure in her work had gone and perfunctory performance taken its place. She was weary of the miserable business of writing to please the many-headed multitude, which the late Dr. Charles Mackay was fond of describing as "fool of a public; pig of a public," while her honest convictions had to be kept locked up in her soul and labeled, "Dangerous," like a can of dynamite.

In Prescott's day she was free to say what she thought ought to be said. Now, she was frequently brought to book for utterances far too bold, in the opinion of the proprietors of the paper, who insisted on a close connection between the counting room and editorial desk. As a result of constantly trimming to suit the fitful breezes of public taste, the *Register* was losing ground. Strange law that governs the minds of men! Kowtow to them and they despise and neglect you. Defy them and they respect and court you.

No; she must not stay with the *Register*. Internal wranglings were shaking it. An eruption might take place any day, changing the whole face of its affairs.

For her salvation, intellectual and physical, she

must go. Yet habit, friendship and a horrible dread of facing new difficulties put up a plea for her to stay. No; she must go, no matter what she had to meet, loneliness, humiliation, disappointment, defeat, want, death itself. **MUST.** Something told her that in a way that brooked no contradiction.

But she was so tired—more tired than any one dreamed, in spite of her almost jaunty cheerfulness.

And what had she as financial armor for the new battle about to begin? Grimly she smiled as she cast her mind's eye in that direction. A few dollars only. "Verily industry and talent combined are richly rewarded," she said. Yet she had made reputation; she was considered successful. However, many a slave to the pen knows that reputation and money do not always go hand in hand. Besides this imposing capital she had her experience and the knowledge of her own powers which it had brought. Valuable capital, to be sure. Yet experience brings us another gift which helps to weaken us by counteracting our faith in ourselves, and that is a knowledge of the difficulties, a bold outlining of the greatness of the task.

What else had she wherewith to gird herself for that trip into the unexplored, so sure to involve racks of many kinds?

In the teeth of a wish to find a quiet place and

there lie down, closing her eyes to the world forever,—in the face of a weariness untellable, she knew that within the hidden depths of herself, under all the scars, disappointments and fatigues was courage.

What other prop had she? A strong, an invincible one—the knowledge that eternal being and her being were one and the same, and that she was never alone or dependent on herself, however much this seemed to be the case; that living, loving souls, angels, if you choose, had charge concerning her and that the everlasting arms of universal love were ever about her.

She would go to New York, a field of many gleaners, truly, but big, and therefore of promise. The needle of her destiny pointed in that direction. There was its magnet. With the decision came peace.

Yet day after day she lingered, telling no one of her decision, and feeling that she belonged neither to the place she was in nor to that for which she was bound—a curious, detached sort of existence such as had ever been hers, when she must tear herself from an accustomed place and seek an unaccustomed one. The work of uprooting herself involved pains and groans like those of a great tree, when torn up by a storm.

In love of locality Cartice was a tree, and frequently said so. Her pleasure would have been to live always in one place, taking deeper root

every day, and loving the soil that sustained her. Doubtless because this was her nature, fate decreed that she should have no chance to take deep root anywhere, for her own good.

Those days of inward groaning and tree-like clinging to a spot of which she had long been weary, reminded her of other days, now years in the past, when she had uprooted herself from the only peaceful bit of life she had known, to go forth and marry Louis Doring and become sister to misery.

Then she had swayed and clung and groaned day after day, only to yield at last to the force that ruled her destiny, and she knew she must do the same now.

A time came, however, when the human tree lay prone, its uprooting an accomplished fact. Its roots, bared to the sun and wind, trembled a little, but the groaning was over.

Now there was nothing to do but tell Chrissalyn and go.

The Butterfly paled as she heard the decision.

"I have known this for a long time," she said, "long before you knew it yourself, but I would not speak of it, lest you might be guided by what I said. I learned it by the inside way that things are told me so often. It's hard for me to have you go; but I understand, and believe it's for the best. Does any one else know?"

"Not yet. I don't tell others, even good

friends, because they will ask questions about my plans and dig my very heart out of my body to find out all about what I am going to do. In the first place I don't know. In the second I should not care to tell if I did. Telling spoils everything for me. Why do people make inquiries of themselves and torture others merely to gratify an idle curiosity?"

"Cartice"—Chrissalyn spoke a little cautiously—"in the face of what you have been saying, and knowing that your temper is not seraphic, I will say I wish I knew for sure that you would have something to hold on to, when you get to New York."

"Chriss, dear, I *must* find something, that's all there is to it. **MUST.** That word is a magnet drawing whatever it demands. Whenever we **MUST** have something, we get it."

Contact with the industrial problem had let a few practical ideas into the Butterfly's once airy head. Therefore she was concerned about the financial future of her friend. Still, she did not comprehend the situation in its tragic entirety. A prop of some kind had ever been near for her to lean on in dire extremity. Fate provides props for those who are not strong enough to stand alone; but the great souls are placed where there is nothing to lean against, that they may both keep and show their strength. They suffer; their hearts often bleed; but they stand.

Then, too, Chrissalyn looked upon her friend as a person of such incomparable ability, that she could overcome any obstacle, however formidable. "How I shall miss you, Cartice," she said, huskily. "How lonely and bereft I shall be."

"You have your admirers, your moths."

"My moths? Yes, my miserable moths," said Chrissalyn, contemptuously. "They are about as much comfort to me, as so many of the genuine insects. I am a proof of evolution. I have evolved too far to find them interesting. But where are the men? Do they not exist outside of novels any more? For a long time I cherished dreams of meeting one whom I could love without being ashamed of myself, but I am giving them up. Sometimes, where I hear of friends marrying, it all sounds so fine that I am quite envious until I see their husbands, and then I am better contented."

For Cartice the pain of parting from her friend was intensified by the knowledge that it meant loss of opportunity to talk with her beloved unseen people. The Butterfly was a telephone to the other world whose like might never be met again.

They spent the last evening together. Their invisible friends understood what was determined upon, without any telling. Prescott was asked if he had any suggestions to make in regard to Cartice's plans.

“It is not for us to direct you,” he said. “You must steer your own bark. That is the business of life. The field is wide, and you have your place therein and will find it. Don’t be discouraged. We shall be often with you, and shall keep an eye on you.”

The evening was one long to be remembered by the two who were so soon to be separated, tinged as it was with the melancholy that colors all last occasions.

The final glimpse Cartice had of the place that had been to her a city of sorrow as well as of light, showed her the Butterfly waving a loving and tearful adieu. Dear Butterfly! Was there ever so charming a combination of vanity, love of pleasure, earthly prettiness and goddess-like ability to do wondrous things?

Cartice settled herself for her journey, feeling somewhat as a soul might who had just issued from one very difficult and wretched incarnation and knew that in a few hours it must begin another, which in all probability would prove more difficult and more wretched.

It takes courage to face the mouths of cannon; yet that, though horrible, lasts not long. But the woman who, alone and unknown, goes into the mixed and frightful mass of humankind represented by a great city, to seek a chance to earn honest bread, displays a courage besides which that of the bravest soldier must lose a little of its

luster. And any one who makes her hard road harder, builds for himself a wall which will not be easy to scale; he is but lengthening the period of his own spiritual evolution.

The train rolled on, its wheels beating a steady rhythm like the feet of flying horses, their vibrations striking the sick heart of the weary woman inside, and making it quake with terror.

She had kept a smiling face before the Butterfly clear to the last; but now that she was alone—at least unknown to her fellow travelers, hence secure from intrusion, her courage evaporated, and she curled up on her sofa, a mere lump of suffering.

As the telegraph posts flew by she pictured herself taken out, tied to one and shot dead by balls from many rifles, and earnestly wished she could exchange her present situation for such brief pain.

Is this world hell? The query had come to her before, and now it challenged her boldly. Whose happiness or safety was secure for the morrow?

Of what was ahead of her she scarcely dared to think. Glimpses of its grim possibilities flashed across her mind, making her mobile face set and stern. A frightened light came into her eyes and a strange expression fluttered around her mouth. In imagination she was seeing the two rivers that flow on either side of New York,

and was thinking of what they had done and were yet to do for those who found the burden of life greater than they could bear.

In that moment she felt a cool, soft breeze about her, and with it came the thought that she could never seek solace there—she who knew that life reached out an unbroken line, beyond the sight and even the dreams of men. Not for her ran rivers, whose flowing waters lapped and swirled and wooed world-weary hearts. Did she believe that silence, nothingness, insensate dust alone were at the end of our journey here, there; blessed be the rivers! But she knew—knew beyond doubt that no river can extinguish the spark of divinity we call consciousness.

After all, why should she fear? No one stands absolutely alone. There is no separateness, no differentiation. Back of each, eternal Being mirrors itself forever; and that which we see is as nothing compared to that which we see not. The cloud of witnesses more than witnesses. Influences invisible, but powerful, are ever working for us. Threads hidden from bodily eyes connect us with all life beheld and unbeheld.

Her own people were in touch with her, loved and inspired her, no matter in what part of the universe they dwelt, and nothing could divide her from them.

Remembering this, the shadow of fear passed,

and she prepared to meet her destiny with courage.

New knowledge had brought new responsibility. Life was not to be haggled through as a hateful bargain; it must be lived in the highest sense; its lessons faithfully learned and character constructed by the master architect, experience. One must do one's best, in the teeth of the storm, in the front of the battle. We must always be able to look our souls in the face without shame.

Suppose her efforts and even her life ended in failure at last! What matter? To succeed in the world's opinion is often to fail in the exacting eye of conscience. Perhaps the only permanent success is failure. The joy, the glory and the reward are in the doing, not in the result. The fateful question for all of us will be, not, "Hast thou won?" but "Hast thou striven?"

The things we call pain and pleasure she knew to be illusions, mere thought pictures painted on the canvas of our consciousness, by ignorance—ignorance of our true being and the true purpose of existence.

So she said, "No matter what comes, since I know that out of all the pain and humiliation the world can put upon me, out of the shadow of death, I shall rise and pass on to my eternal unfolding.

"For me there is no want. Have I not bread

to eat that thousands of others as yet have not, because they will not receive it?

“For me and for the whole human race there is but one thing needful, and that is the knowledge that eternal being is within, around, about us and we are it.”

Spiritualism? The ignorant will say with a sneer. Yes, in the highest, broadest and deepest sense. It sustained this lonely woman on her journey to a great city to work out her life's problem, and after she was there it gave her patience and confidence. It made it impossible for her to seek the river, and enabled her to wear a cheerful face and carry a hopeful heart, while her little store of money dribbled down to a few lonesome dollars.

Without this rock of faith those long, lonely days of seeking and waiting would have been unbearable. Sometimes she sat in the public squares looking compassionately upon the pitiful people about her. The homeless, the hopeless, the hungry, the despairing, the weary, the ailing, the suffering, the broken-hearted were there, some in rags and some in fine garments. Within each one ached and ate the canker of a wretchedness they tried to hide from happier souls who passed them by.

Cartice read their misery by the light of past suffering, and yearned to say to them: “Awake! You are in a dark dream. The conditions that

trouble you are unreal—mere illusions, and touch not your true life at all. You are gods every one, but unaware of your divinity. One day the dream shall pass and you shall know this.”

But the etiquette of civilization forbade it. We see our fellow beings suffer and perish from some wound in the soul, yet approach them not. All she could do was to send out to them, through the silent waves of thought, messages of hope and good cheer.

In those days of striving and waiting and studying the swarming life about her Mrs. Dorring turned over the economic problem in her mind many times. Curious industrial system, that condemns idleness and yet makes the search for employment bitter and hard!

The two arts which held her chance were hedged about in such a way that the most she could do was to shoot an arrow from afar and trust that it might stick. Nor was she unaware that many other arrows were flying from other archers, each one diminishing the chances of the rest.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BOHEMIA'S HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS.

“Work thou for pleasure ; paint or sing or carve
The thing thou lovest, though the body starve.
Who works for glory misses oft the goal ;
Who works for money coins his very soul.
Work for the work's sake, then, and it may be
That these things shall be added unto thee.”

—*Kenyon Cox.*

ONE day a miracle happened,—at least Cartice Doring considered it a miracle. She was swinging to a strap in one of the always dirty and frequently crowded cars of the elevated railroad—when, as the train went ricketing round a curve she was flung against a man behind her with such force that both well-nigh fell to the floor.

Before she could apologize, a familiar voice said :

“Mrs. Doring! I'm delighted to have been knocked down, since it proves to be the means of meeting you.”

He was a newspaper man whose occasional visits to the *Register* she had greatly enjoyed ; and his was the first familiar face that she had encountered since she had turned her back on former scenes.

“Why, Mr. Farnsworth, I'm glad enough to

cry," she blurted out, and came near proving the truth of her assertion.

When he learned that she had come to New York to seek her fortune, he said:

"I can put a spoke in your wheel, for I came here with that intention myself, and have my tent permanently pitched. A pen and pencil like yours need never be idle. Come to our publishing house to-morrow at two o'clock—here's a card—and we will lay the corner-stone of your future greatness."

Cartice was wakeful far into the night nursing her gratitude, and thinking over the miracle. Farnsworth had been a lifelong friend to Prescott. Perhaps Prescott brought about their meeting, and put it into Farnsworth's head to employ her. Who knows what the people we call dead may not be able to do? Perhaps they give us many of our thoughts, purposes and plans. Does not every event in our lives, however trivial and insignificant, hang upon thousands of preceding events, great and small?

And when it comes to a question of what a soul can or cannot do, embodied or disembodied, who can answer?

What is the soul of man? Before assigning it limitations it were well to know its composition. It is assumed to be the "immortal unit which represents personality"; but here and there have been men and women who demonstrated a mar-

velous complexity of ego, their visible body seeming a mere tenement for a variety of distinct personalities, all linked together by some mysterious chain of kinship, though not all resembling each other, and not always dwelling in harmony.

Stevenson makes Dr. Jekyll say, "I hazard a guess that man will be ultimately known for a mere polity of multifarious, incongruous and independent denizens."

Are we not all conscious of a Mr. Hyde within us who breaks out at times and sadly stains the good record of Dr. Jekyll? May we not be harboring many Jekylls and Hydes, each differing in degrees of goodness and badness?

Thinking on this, Cartice remembered the answer of the nameless wise one to the question, "What is the soul?"—an answer that startled her, for it opened a vista so vast, since it meant that the soul is God, or absolute being revealing himself or itself.

This being granted, its personalities are beyond computation. Its Jekylls and Hydes and its millions which are neither Jekylls nor Hydes are past number.

In a sea of wonder like this is it worth while to ponder the causes of any miracle great or tiny?

The next day Cartice found herself installed at a desk in Farnsworth's publishing house, pen and pencil both flying. The wished-for foothold was found, and she stood upon it, busy and grateful.

After becoming acquainted with a number of the metropolitan people of the pen, she was obliged to give up many of her illusions regarding them. Some of whom she had formed a flattering opinion, on acquaintance fell far below the mark. Others who flew high on paper, kept shockingly near the ground off paper. Some who had been successful were struggling frantically against a turn of the tide. But that which astonished and pained her most was their lack of ennobling ideals. Their pens were ever pointed toward the market, their talk was of prices, not ideas, and the shrine at which they worshipped was the ninth letter of the alphabet.

For the most part they were so busy writing and talking of what they had written and intended to write, that none read another's production. Like swimmers in a turbulent sea, their energies were wholly given to the business of keeping afloat. In slavery to the baker and meat-seller, they expressed only such sentiments as they believed acceptable to the commonplace majority,—otherwise marketable products. They trimmed, tempered, pruned, whittled and cut their literary wares, to make them suit what they supposed to be the public's wants, without regard to conscience or convictions.

Did all angle in these shallow waters? No! Here and there a worthy few had boldly refused to write down to the low level of average intelli-

gence. They had penned their honest thought, and by so doing had brought a respectable portion of the public up to their plane, fame and money sometimes coming with it. Consciously or unconsciously they had operated a great law of the universe, that of giving one's best to get the best.

In other words they had faithfully followed their highest ideals, in the face of possible ruin, under the pressure of poverty and the frowns of public taste and opinion. To do this is to live a great principle, to set the soul free. Whoever does this shall reap the reward of principle; he shall find his measure full. The multitude whose slavish bonds of ignorance he defies will cringe and fawn at his feet and pour its gold into his coffers.

The ideal is the real. If it be high its faithful followers are lifted up.

Workers who spend their lives in throwing sops to the mass of mediocre minds pay the inevitable penalty at last. They fall into the contempt of the very monster whose favor they have courted, who at heart respects only its masters, not its slaves.

One day Bardell, a struggler whose weapon was the pencil and whose field was the dreadful one of the commonest newspaper art, stopped at Mrs. Doring's desk, as he often did, for a word or

two. She regarded him as an almost hopeless bungler, but liked his unassertive, dreamy personality. Some of his drawings were altogether abominable, and in none of them did he seem to have the slightest pride.

He was undersized and queer-looking, with a big square head, a thin stooping body, large hollow eyes, and a face that suggested a worn-out spirit.

Ordinarily he had almost no words about anything, yet seemed to derive a silent pleasure from hanging near Cartice's desk a few moments, when he brought his drawings to the "art man" of the house. His self-effacement was so refreshing to Cartice after much contact with pushing ninth-letter people, that she showed him marked civility.

To-day he seated himself and asked her opinion of the drawing he carried. As usual, his manner was without animation, yet she instantly felt that he expected a word of praise. This was extraordinary on his part, as he invariably gave out the wordless impression that he continued to live more from habit than anything else, but found life wholly without interest.

The picture, which was destined to illustrate a jingling little rhyme and visualize it for such readers as have no imagination, represented a short-skirted maid standing by a rustic fountain, pitcher in hand. Cartice gave a little cry of de-

light, as her eyes fell upon it, though a second glance showed her that something was wrong with it, but what, she could not for a moment say. Presently the blunder stood revealed, and was gross enough to mortify Bardell for all time, if she pointed it out. Yet it would be his ruin to let him go to the "art man," with the drawing as it was. So she said, "It is charmingly done; but there is a trifling error in it. The girl's feet are put on wrong. Left and right have changed places."

The pale, hollow face of the artist flushed red with shame. "I'm most grateful to you, Mrs. Doring," he said, as his astonished eyes saw the hitherto unnoticed blunder. "Had I gone to Buskirk with that it would have been the end of me in this shop. As it is he almost withers me with his contempt. It doesn't stop at my work, either, but includes all there is of me, physically, mentally, artistically, and financially. I sustain myself under it with the reflection that, however profound his contempt for me, it is outdone again and again by my contempt for myself."

Cartice understood well the awful wounds to self-respect men and women are daily forced to endure for the sake of a chance to earn a livelihood. She looked at Bardell with a vast, wordless sympathy shining in her eyes, thinking of the courage necessary in the tragedy of life, as displayed by the man before her and tens of

thousands of others. He understood and went on :

“I don’t endure it for the mere sake of living, I assure you. The experience called life, as I know it, isn’t worth it. But when I was younger and considerably more of a fool than I am now, I married, as a kind of business or because others did, or I don’t really know why. Anyhow, I have a little family now, and I have to put up with everything, no matter what, in order to support them. Besides, I have other ties that hold me to life, and those are my ideals.”

Mrs. Doring looked up with a start. “Tell me about them,” she said.

“Ever since I can remember they have been with me, and are my true life,” he said. “They exist in the shape of simple rustic scenes, old-time well-sweeps, tumble-down stone-houses and walls and things of that sort, with people in them who are a part of their history. They come into my mind and insist upon being painted. They are not satisfied to be put in black and white. That is crucifixion for them and for me, too. They beg, entreat and command me to put them in color.

“This girl at the old-time fountain in this drawing is one of them. That’s the reason the picture isn’t hard and lifeless like most of the truck I bring in here. The blunder of putting her feet on wrong occurred, because I drew the

feet last, and about that time she found out that she wasn't being painted, but was to be a sacrifice to the terrible monster of newspaper illustration, which is an easy way to please children and uneducated people, and an offence to those of a higher order of intelligence. In rage at the use I was going to make of her she jumped up and down so fast that her feet got tangled in my mind. I saw her, you understand. She was real—I saw her—not in flesh and blood, but imagination, which to me is a kind of higher reality."

Astonished and delighted to find one worker with ideals above mere keeping afloat, Cartice asked him if he worked on his ideals or merely dreamed of them.

"I reach after them all I can," he said, "handicapped as I am. I give my heart to them, though I haven't been able to give them much of my time. But I have not kicked them out of my way, or murdered them to sell their flesh at the nearest market, as many of my associates have done. Nor have I given up the belief that, if we work on our ideals, devote ourselves to them, in the face of every obstacle, we shall be lifted out of the dreadful mire of the commonplace, where the feet of most of us stick fast all our lives. But they will have no half-hearted devotion. They want whole-souled service only, and they are right. Willing to give us all of themselves it is only fair they should ask all from us.

“I have worked but little in oil, and am almost entirely uninstructed, yet these pictures form, whenever I take up a brush ; and it isn't putting it too strong to say that they beg to be painted. They come in color exactly as they want to be put on canvas,—not simply in my mind, but before my eyes, though thin and shadowy.

“One Sunday when rambling in the country I passed an old well, and said to myself, ‘I'll paint that.’ Instantly I saw a man lying by the wall, though no man was there. I painted it that way and put it up in the den I call my studio.

“One day a stranger who came there with one of my friends saw it and took a great fancy to it. He said it was a scene from his memory. The old well was the one at his childhood's home, and the man was his father, as he had seen him lying in the shade many a time, long ago. The upshot of it was, that he offered me two hundred and fifty dollars for it—it was a little thing—which it is needless to say I accepted. When he went away I thought I ought to faint or do something extraordinary to work off my astonishment.”

“But you didn't rest on that?”

“No ; I went on with other ideals, in little spots of time squeezed out of the odd-jobbery of my daily grind in black and white. I believe that, when we work on our ideals, the very shape of our heads change. My mother says mine is

changing, for which I am most grateful, its original shape being like unto an old-fashioned country horse-block."

"Have you had sympathy in the pursuit of your ideals?" Cartice asked.

"Not always. That was a want I felt for ten years. All that time I hunted for a companion, an artist, who, like myself, loved the country and rural subjects, to paint with me. At last I found one and have him yet. We inspire each other. Together we go to the country on Sundays and make studies. The other artists I encounter in my humble path are so woodeny, so coarse, so worldly that I need patience to suffer them at all, and I never find them companionable. They chaff me and call me a sentimentalist. I don't care. I believe in sentiment. If I didn't idealize life and work, I should have to give both up. I would willingly go and live in the humblest little old place in the country and never see a city again, if I could but work on my ideals."

Cartice was seeing the square-headed little plodder from a new point of view—an inner and spiritual one, and in its beautifying light the square head became symmetrical, the stooping shoulders erect, the pale face attractive, the eyes aflame with vital force, and the bearing that of one conscious of being of value. It was then that she recognized him as one of her own people, from her own planet, and blamed herself for not

sooner seeing through the transparent mask that hard environment had made.

She asked him what he thought is to be the fate of those, who, having an ideal, stifle, ignore or slaughter it even, and give their time and energy to the performance of some poor pitiful, paltry work which demands but a tithe of their ability, for the sake of a little money with which to keep out the unwelcome howls of the wolf.

“Look about you and see,” he said, with a contemptuous gesture. “Look at me, a creature slinking in and out of rich publishing houses, hunting crumbs, like the dogs that hung round the rich man’s table, with fear written in every movement, dejection in my spirit, indigence in my garments and weariness in my heart.”

He got up and walked to and fro nervously, and as he moved and talked he became transformed. The timid, shrinking little figure vanished and in its place strode one whose step was firm and eye fearless.

“There are hundreds like me. The woods—the city’s accursed woods are full of them. They run over each other in their eagerness to do the bidding of some master who can drop a coin or so into their flabby purses. Faust sold his soul to the devil for a good price; but we, miserable wretches, sell it daily for a song. Why? Because we are such pitiful cowards that we can’t face the scarecrow that goes by the name of

starvation. We live so far below our true selves that we don't know the law that would carry us through, which is, give the best to get the best. Why not trust the soul? The ideal is the real; it is the voice of the soul, otherwise the voice of God, and it *must* have expression. If not here and now, then sometime, somewhere. Its account is bound to be presented and *must* be paid. Death itself can't prevent the final settlement.

"What do they do at school with the lazy boy who slights his lessons? After while they turn him back in his books and he has his road to retrace. We shall have the same experience, if we have heard the voice of the ideal and heeded it not. We shall be sent back to do it all over again—yes, from beyond the grave, for what can there be on the other side for him who has betrayed his trust, but contempt and a command to go back and try again?"

He stopped before Cartice, and with blazing eyes and uplifted finger said, "In this moment I determine to outrage my ideals no more, come what may. I have new light. We all have been acting on the assumption that we knew what would happen if we didn't do thus and so. In point of fact nobody knows. With results we have nothing to do. We have only to follow our highest leading and leave the rest to God. To ignore or debase a noble gift that has been entrusted to us is a sin against our souls, which

many of us have stupidly committed day after day, and we are daily paying the penalty. You shall see me here no more, bartering work in which I have no heart for a few miserable dollars. Never again ; no, never again."

"You are right, Mr. Bardell, a thousand times right," said Mrs. Doring, with throbbing heart and glistening eyes. "I have long known that one should never give less than the best, and that an outraged ideal will be avenged. Yet I daily commit that sin. I used to feel that I had something more than common to do in the world. I had ideals ; but I put them off, always waiting for a time when I could see my way clear to devote myself entirely to them. I waited too long. Now they come less frequently and are less urgent, and I have grown weary and indifferent. I wasted my time hunting happiness."

"Happiness belongs to the ideal," said Bardell. "It is a matter of subjective appreciation, so is its opposite, misery. Perhaps it would be clearer to say that happiness exists in the idea one forms of it, hence it is purely ideal. We are happy, when we believe ourselves happy. But for the most part all the world thinks happiness is to be found in externals ; that it can be secured in thick slices which we can eat like bread, while comfortably seated in good houses. Money and marriage are supposed to have a monopoly of it. What idocy !"

“Yes, idiocy,” Cartice echoed. “Thackeray says, ‘For my own part I know of nothing more contemptible, unmanly or unwomanly and craven than the everlasting sighing for happiness.’ When a child, I had a consciousness or memory of a world in which I had once lived where there was no such word as happiness, and yet none were unhappy. I understand that now. It means that happiness only exists where it is not thought of, talked about or pursued. I believe it is intended that we shall be happy; but not in our own foolish way. Freedom is the destiny of the human race, and that freedom holds for us a happiness infinitely greater and higher than we now can imagine, because it contains our full development, our perfected intellectual and spiritual growth. It is the freedom of truth, long since prophesied. When we know the truth, we are free, and happiness comes with freedom. Heaven is within one; it consists in the soul’s unfolding or coming into a knowledge of itself. We reach that through expression. In this way we grow, as every plant struggles to do. So you see, if we strangle our ideals, we stunt our growth, and shall be cut down like the bent, and imperfect tree,—cut down, to come again perhaps, for another trial, and still another and another until our destiny is accomplished. Therefore it is that doing our best should be our religion, as it is na-

ture's religion. It is the only road we can take which leads to the goal at which we must arrive, sooner or later. It is the price each soul must pay who would be saved. Instead of that, most of us have gone about hunting happiness on a childish plane, and making a great plaint, when we didn't find it. 'Twould be laughable, were it not so pitiful."

"Isn't it plain enough," said Bardell, "that if a wholesome civic and social spirit prevailed, we should be sufficiently enlightened to find our reward in doing our best, whether it were to raise potatoes, polish door knobs or paint pictures. All great men and women who have helped humankind have done so. They gave their best and nothing less, even when the world did not want it, and stoned them for it. They had a far greater reward than human appreciation. They grew to heroic, mental and spiritual stature. If Jesus of Nazareth had not given the best that was in Him, even at the cost of crucifixion, He could not have been the light of the world.

"How would it be with the world to-day, if all the great spirits that make up the enlightened minority, had merely jogged on doing something that secured the necessities of the body, rather than run any risk of being short of bread by pointing a new road? The soul must follow its best light, taking no thought for the result. I shall do that henceforth."

"I rejoice in your emancipation," Cartice said, looking at him with glowing eyes. "I begin to see what it means to be born again. May it not be to awaken a knowledge of our own being, value and work?"

Bardell bade her good-bye with the seriousness of one going on a long journey. When he was gone a new sense of loneliness came over her. It was because he already had started up the mountain, leaving her still in the vale.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE JOYS.

“Why went that young life out
On honor’s perilous road?
The carping tongue and the jealous mind
Stay here to wound and goad.

“A picture once I saw—
Three crosses against the sky!
And the heaviest cross was the highest one;
Perhaps that answers why.”

MRS. DORING was surprised and delighted at receiving a visit from the Joys one evening. Having parted with everything that goes by the name of property, they had come to New York to seek fortune on the dramatic stage, both having talent and taste for mimic art. As joyful as ever, they met their changed fortunes with their old-time merry laugh. Their two children were in an excellent school, and the business now in hand was seeking a chance to earn the money necessary to keep the machinery of life moving for them all.

“Our time for looking about is somewhat limited,” said Burton, with cheery humor, “as the cash box is not overflowing.”

“We shall find something,” said Lilla, with calm assurance.

“MUST,” said Mrs. Doring. “Must is a magnet. What we must have, we always get.”

The difficult search began at once in dead earnest. Thousands had walked the rough road before them, some of whom had found foothold, but others by scores and hundreds had gone down in the city’s remorseless maelstrom. It was like being wrecked in mid-ocean. Some managed to seize a plank and keep afloat. Some spent their strength and sank early. Others buffeted the waves long and bravely, only to go down at last, a pitiful, a woful, a heart-breaking spectacle.

The animal knows as the dramatic agent was an unknown quantity to the Joys, hence they were not prepared for his peculiar antics. Snubs, insults and sneers rained down upon them. Still they kept on and still they wore cheerful faces, still the sunshine of their hearts was unclouded—the heavenly sunshine that was rated as mere empty-headedness by duller, coarser souls.

Days and weeks rolled on, for “time carries no anchor,” until the money that constituted their plank on the city’s rough ocean was gone.

When talking with Cartice one evening, Lilla Joy said: “If we did not *know* that we outlast death and have endless life before us, Burton and I would end our troubles and our children’s too, perhaps. It would require less courage than we need for one day of life now. But we *know* that

we can't kill ourselves, however much we might try because there is no death. In spite of bullets, knives, poisons and rivers, we should still be alive, wondering, no doubt, why we were so blind as to think we could destroy that which is indestructible. No; our salvation must be worked out clear to the end, uncomplainingly. We are here to learn, and must stay until we are ready to go higher. At the longest, our probation is short, and it means so much to us. We are building the edifice of character, which is to last for all time. This little chapter of existence is but a day in the great cycle. No; I shall not give up; I shall never despair, let come what may."

Day succeeded day, but no brighter outlook opened, yet never were they seen with a cloud on their faces. Though their purses were empty, friendship and compassion kept away bitter need, and their spirits were sweet enough to accept the goods the gods sent without letting their pride be wounded. It needs a sweeter spirit to receive than to give.

At last a foothold on the stage was gained for both—an opportunity more likely to increase humility than foster vanity, but they accepted it thankfully, and it led on to better things.

All went well for a time; but one day a telegram came announcing the dangerous illness of their children, who had fallen victims to an epidemic. They went at once. The children

died, and a few days later their father also closed his eyes to this world.

Lilla returned to New York to go on with the grim business of life. Was the joy gone from her face? No; it was still there, softened, heightened and illumined by a new and holy light.

“Dear friend,” she said, as she and Cartice talked together on the evening of her return, “there are three new graves in the old cemetery at home, but they do not hold my husband and children. That which each contains is an unreality, a thing never destined to endure,—a garment which the real being wore to make itself seen by our dim eyes. Alice Carey has described it well :

Though you wore something earthly about you
Which once we called you—
A robe all transparent and brightened
With the soul shining through.

But when you had dropped it in going—
'Twas but yours for a day—
Safe back in the bosom of Nature,
We laid it away.

Strewing over it odorous blossoms,
Their perfume to shed :
But you never were buried beneath them,
And never were dead.

“Friends say that I am left alone; but it is not true. I am never alone. There is no separation for those whom love unites. We are one in

the universal spirit of love—God. Did not one friend beyond the grave tell us that every death is a resurrection? Is not the stone already rolled away from every sepulchre? Would I call my dear ones back to face the cruel conditions of life here? No, a thousand times no. When I looked at the dead face of my husband, so calm, and profoundly at peace with everything, I said ‘My love, my dear love, heart of my heart and soul of my soul, love of my youth and companion of my spirit forevermore, I thank God that the hard things of the world can hurt you no more.’ The cruelest pang poverty has given me was seeing him bear humiliation and insult in silence, with heavenly patience. Poverty for oneself is bad enough, but when we see those we love suffer because of it, we know exquisite anguish. I can make the fight alone, and it is better so. He is safe. That will sustain me.

“And my children; they, too, are safe. It is well with them. They are not lost. All things we call lost are in the angels’ keeping.

“I shall go on with my work, thankful for the chance, disagreeable as much of it is, because of unavoidable contact with shallow, inferior people. But my true life is away from it all, sacred and safe. There is a reason beyond my fathoming for my being what and where I am. It is all right—all wisely directed, and I shall go on, not sullenly, but in patience and hope. My faith is

that all is well. I must live it and not simply talk it."

Looking at Lilla's beautiful face, brightened with the radiance of belief, Cartice Doring knew that one by one she was finding her people—the people whom she dimly remembered as having been a part of her life in the remote past, and who were linked by the ties of sympathy and love to the present and all the endless future.

Her own people,—the faithful, the heroic the aspiring, the wide-minded, the loving, the true.

Lilla was one of them—Lilla of the light heart and rippling laugh in days gone by; and of the sturdy soul and dauntless faith in sorrow and misfortune.

Now Cartice saw that her own people all became acquainted with suffering, sooner or later, and that this was the greatest of teachers to the human race. Without suffering nothing is born, nothing grows.

"Who are these in white garments?" asked the saint of the heavenly visions.

"They are those who have passed through great tribulation," was the answer.

In fancy she saw again the long procession, made up of her people. Out of the dim and far distant past they came, filing steadily on into the unseen, endless future. In each spirit burned the quenchless fire we name genius; on each face were signs of suffering; "but no voice uttered

plaints." Not all were victors. Many were of the baffled and beaten, the disappointed and defeated, but they went to the wall with unbent head and silent, smiling lips.

"My people, my dear people," she said, "with you I breathe the air native to my soul. You sought the truth, you found it, you lived it, and it made you free."

What is truth? Who can answer the Roman governor's question? In the Syriac tongue it is described as "the arrow which flies to the mark." Nothing else reaches the mark. Nothing else has a mark. Life has no other aim and end than to free oneself from error, through a knowledge of truth. This is the only power that can set us free, and only in freedom is happiness.

But with most people the search is not for truth but success—success on the commonplace, external plane—which is the very negation of moral growth and spiritual progress. High minds, dedicated to noble ideals are few, but mediocres are numerous.

"When we have escaped from the region of mediocrity we revel in a purer atmosphere, where we may join hands with the elect and dance a round," said Marie Bashkirtseff, one of the youngest, bravest and brightest of the elect.

The mediocre mass is an aggregation of self-enslaved minds, against whose self-satisfied stupidity the gods themselves are powerless.

CHAPTER XX.

PEOPLE OF THE PAST.

“Here sits he, shaping wings to fly :
His heart forebodes a mystery ;
He names the name eternity.”—*Tennyson*.

“What birth is, that also is death ; it is the same line drawn in two directions.”—*Schopenhauer*.

ONE evening at the house of a famous orator Mrs. Doring saw a face with which she had been familiar since childhood, yet never before had she seen it outside of the enchanted realm of imagination.

It was a woman's face, strong, noble, beautiful, and the eyes, the brown eyes of it, had in them a compassion that embraced the whole human race.

Cartice looked upon it with an all-compelling fascination, for it was the face of one of her own people—the very dearest one—the Helen of her young dreams, to whom she used to tell her hopes and yearnings, and who always understood, and gave sympathy and cheer.

How often had she pictured that face on paper, trying to make objective what she saw clearly with her subjective sight, but how impossible it had ever been to give the eyes the direct, comprehensive, compassionate glow that distin-

guished them,—the light of the soul itself, which went straight to other souls!

She would not ask the name lest it prove to be one below her ideal. She hardly dared look away lest the precious vision vanish, while her eyes were turned aside. No; it were better to hold the glad fancy as long as possible. "Do you know Helen Gardener?" asked a voice at her side.

She turned to the speaker, dazed and scarcely understanding.

"Whom?"

"Helen Gardener, the author,—that lady you were looking at just now. Like Huxley and some of the more humble of us she believes that the main thing is to have done with lying."

"Then she is my Helen," thought Cartice. "How remarkable, too, that she has the very same name I gave her."

"Come, Mrs. Doring," said her friend, "I want to have you meet her. I fancy you two will be pleased with each other."

When Cartice found herself talking with the incarnation of one of her ideal people of long ago, she had a flash of knowledge of the oneness, inseparableness and unchangeableness of all things past, present and future.

Did her new-found, old-time friend recognize her? It would seem so, for she was strongly attracted to Cartice from the first moment.

The question under discussion in the little group of whom she was one, was whether art, especially the art of fiction, should exist for art's sake only—that is to give pleasure—or should it also aim to instruct.

“I believe,” said Helen Gardener, “and have lived up to my belief, that fiction which merely entertains, and carefully steers clear of the deep and often dark problems that face all thoughtful minds is pernicious in its effect. The literature of the optimist is the literature of shallowness and selfishness, a bid for surface appreciation, an appeal to a light and superficial taste. Life is tragic. If it be represented in fiction, let the picture be true to nature. The novel should be a tonic, not an opiate. What think you, Mrs. Doring?”

“Like Goethe and Schiller I think art ‘no luxury of leisure, no mere amusement to charm the idle nor relax the care-worn; but a mighty influence, serious in its aims, although pleasurable in its means.’ The advocates of art for art's sake, say that its object is the creation of the beautiful. What is the beautiful? Is it that which pleases the eye only, or has it power to thrill the soul? The great novels have all carried great messages. They have shaken the hearts of men and aroused them to new knowledge; they have broken the bonds of prejudice, and set the bondsmen free. They have effected a movement of

the thought-world in the direction of 'that far-off, divine event toward which the whole creation moves.' They have spoken the truth as their authors beheld it."

Helen Gardener's brown eyes glowed and she smiled affectionately, saying:

"You and I belong to the same ethical family, Mrs. Doring."

That night as she lay down to sleep, Cartice half persuaded herself that she was again a child, day-dreaming under the elm tree, the world unknown and still idealized, and the years that lay between that time and the present obliterated.

"Do I wish it were so?" she asked herself.

"No. I am glad so much of the journey has been accomplished. The future is always better than the past. It has in it that which we are to become, for life is endless becoming."

Cartice and the new-found Helen became warm friends; but not till their friendship had stood the test of time did Cartice tell her how the creative power we call imagination had found her years before.

Quite as unexpectedly did Mrs. Doring one day meet the stranger to whom she had confided her ambitions and dreams under the elm tree long ago. She recognized him instantly, though of course he did not know her.

The great world knew him well. The bauble fame, and the jewel of success were his.

It was he who had sung :

“I'd rather fail in Bohemia, than win in another land.

* * * * *

Its honors not garnered by thrift or trade,
But for beauty and truth men's souls have made.”

When she made herself known to him, his first question was, “Have you found your own people?”

“A few,” she answered, “a faithful few; but the search goes on forever.”

In a little while he went away—went into the silence.

Still another picture of the past came and blended with the present.

In the parlors of a friend one evening, Mrs. Doring met a number of the most eminent women from all parts of the country, who work for the political liberty of their sex. There had been a convention in Washington, and many of the delegates were “doing” New York before returning home.

A lady from what then was a territory, but is now a state, charmingly told some of her experiences in laboring with members of her legislature. She mentioned name after name, relating various incidents, some humorous, and some exciting compassion on account of their revelation

of the depths of ignorance in certain legislative minds.

“After several encounters with darkened minds of the class I have just mentioned,” said the speaker, “it was a pleasure to have a chat with Representative Kendall. We knew well where he stood, for throughout his career, as editor and lawmaker, he has distinguished himself as the staunch friend of every movement that promised to help women win a greater freedom and therefore gain a greater usefulness.

“Once I asked him how it was that he who had appreciated women personally so little as never to have married one, was yet so loyal a supporter of them in the aggregate that he cheerfully put his shoulder to the wheel of every cart which carried their burdens.

“‘Now that,’ said he, with a boyish laugh and sunny smile, ‘has its root in a bit of sentiment; but I don’t deny that it has grown into a principle. The only woman I found indispensable to me found me very dispensable to her. Through that experience I learned that love, if it be genuine, can rise higher than possession. She was one of your emancipated; that is, she made a place for herself in the world, and leaned on no one. Her life showed me that woman could grow to heroic mental stature, if she would think, work and act for herself. The one of whom I speak requested me to do what I could

all my life to make it easier for women to get out of their dependent condition. I have done so and have found pleasure in it. She is in the world somewhere, still, and I feel that everything I do for women helps her. That's my story. Take it and use it, if you wish, as an example of how the monster man can be humanized and regenerated by a woman who neither loved him nor married him.'

"‘Whatever good I may have done, whatever I have achieved in any praiseworthy direction, I owe to that woman. But for her wholesome encouragement, if living at all, I should be still a clerk at some more prosperous man's desk, withered in spirit and wasted in body, and with no brains at all. It used to be quite the correct thing, in stories, for good women to marry rakish fellows, and ‘make men of them,’ as the phrase had it. I am now convinced they achieve that result far quicker, when they don't marry them, whether rakish or otherwise, but make them stand on their own feet entirely.’”

Mrs. Doring listened to this story, feeling very much as might a ghost who comes wandering back to its old haunts and hears some one talking of its life when on earth, for this Kendall was her old lover whom she loved not and she was the woman of whom he spoke. Turning to the writing desk of her hostess, she wrote:

“Cartice Hill Doring sends regards to the

Honorable Charles Kendall. It is with grateful pleasure she learns that he has been faithful to the promise made to her long ago, to do what he could to make life broader and freer for woman-kind."

The response was prompt and full. He told the story of his life from the day of their parting to the day of writing. Then came these paragraphs:

"I am more than glad to have found you again. Not that I ever really lost you, for you have an eternal abiding-place in my mind and heart. Though I have forgotten much and wish I could forget still more of the rubbish of memory, neither you nor aught pertaining to you can be forgotten. You are not forgettable. But I am glad to be able to talk with you once more, although it be only on paper and across a continent. For me the end of the drama is near. I am in the last act, which has but few scenes. Life and death! what are they? We know as much of one as of the other, for we understand neither. We drop the question of whence because the imminent whither faces us and must be met, and dark enough it looms before us as we confront it at short range. Who can answer this cry of perplexed humanity?

"I turn to you as I did in the past, and bade you decide whether I should go or stay. Now I have no choice but to go; yet tell me, shall I go

with peace and trust into light, or must I lie down to be wrapped in darkness and silence forever? It is a time when my own strength is insufficient, and I reach out for the clasp of an assuring hand.

“Is it strange that I turn to you for the help I need on this journey, which, though lonesome, is brief? It seems a natural thing to do. In all the years since I saw you, and have known nothing of you, when the way was uncertain, I always turned to you for guidance. I said to myself: ‘Would Cartice Hill wish me to do this?’ And I did that which I thought you would sanction. So you see you have been with me all the time. We have never been separated.

“To me you are always young—young and full of courage and hope. I see you as I saw you last, a precious picture in my memory. The years that have passed since then are blown like a breath away. I am sitting beside you in the park again. I can almost touch your blue dress, and I hear the scratching of your parasol as you wrote with its tip on the ground.

“The disease that was incipient in me in youth has been bravely baffled by this climate. I sometimes think it is the insidious agent that will ultimately destroy the human race. The end must come, however, even here, and I see that it is coming.

“So tell me what life has taught you about death, if anything. No matter how hard and grim and fearsome the knowledge may be, I want to know it. Strange that although we devote our lives to learning, and many become vain of their acquirements, of this, the most important of all subjects, nobody knows anything, and nobody cares to learn till about to open the dread door.”

This appeal Cartice answered by telling the story of her communion with friends called dead, and she told this with a directness and simplicity that went straight to the mark. To her it was clear enough that, if a man die, he shall live again,—and shall grow, his growth depending upon his aspirations. Genius itself has been described as a “faculty for growth.” Being a citizen of the universe, man is destined to know the universe as his native village. The form only changes. Death is not.

To this Kendall wrote:

“You have destroyed the last enemy for me. ‘Only the form changes.’ Need we dread that? We may even be said to be used to it. We haven’t the same bodies we began life with. They have changed in every particular, again and again.

“How extraordinary have been your privileges of learning those things to which most of us

have been so blind. Why not write the story out more fully and publish it? Since it has helped me, might it not help others? But don't put it into a newspaper. There it would take no higher rank than the traditional, blood-curdling ghost-story. Make a book of it. That will place it on its own feet, to stand or fall by its merits.

"Yes, tell your experiences with those who dwell in what we call another world; in fact, however, another condition.

"I have had an instinctive, though not unwavering belief that this life was not the end of us—perhaps not the beginning; but I had my hours of gloomy doubt. The old twaddle of an eternity of happiness made up of harps and golden streets did not appeal to either my intelligence or taste. Perhaps, it was a shade less attractive than annihilation.

"Learning to grow and to do, that is what makes an immortality worth having.

"I have lived on good terms with my conscience, which is of an old-fashioned cut, not from fear of hell or hope of heaven, but because I am that sort of man. I could not do otherwise. Yet I wish I might have learned what you tell me, earlier. I think it would have made the ills of life here of less moment and might have enhanced its joys and beauties.

“Who, understanding the philosophy of continued life as it has been revealed to you, could fail to try and acquire some of the capital, thieves cannot steal, with which to begin the larger life that opens to us, when we pass the gates of death? It is helping me to make my remaining time of more value.

“You have influenced me as no other person has done ever since I knew you. Now you light the road out of the world for me. I begin to see that there are no accidents.

“Let who will write the shallow tales that reach no farther than the wedding-day. Write you the wonderful story of the love of God, as ’twas told you by those who have tasted death and found it not bitter—tell how this love encompasses and pervades everything in the universe, conserving all and destroying nothing. Tell of the happiness destined for the soul of man, which consists in endless unfolding. Tell all this as simply and directly as you have told it to me, and you will inspire the doubting and cheer the despairing.”

To which Cartice replied: “In an old book it is written, ‘Though one returned from the dead, they would not believe.’”

Kendall wrote: “In the same book it is written, ‘Let your light shine.’”

That night she sat down to write the first chapter of the book, but instead wrote this:

HIS MESSAGE.

He came, my dead love, at the close of the day,
Though the earth had long covered his garments of clay.
His face glowed with light and with love as he smil'd
And spoke in the voice that my heart had beguil'd—
The beautiful voice that my heart had beguil'd.

“You have wondered, my darling, what soul was the one
To first greet me with love when my dying was done—
When I woke from the slumber that stretches between
The flesh-and-blood world and the kingdom unseen—
The world that you see and the kingdom unseen.

“Know then that the spirit, earth's veil cast away,
Sees only the true in that radiant day.
He who first o'er my spirit, newborn, bent and smiled,
Was the foe who had gone from me unreconciled—
My foe who had gone from me unreconciled.”

So spake my dead love and then vanished away,
Like the mist of the valley when riseth the day.
But I know, since that moment, that hate is a dream
From which the soul wakes when it crosses Death's stream—
Awakes to love only, across that dark stream.

I know, too, that Death cannot change, cannot kill
E'en the person. My lover, though dead, loves me still;
For he came, as of old, and upon me he smil'd,
And spoke in the voice that my heart had beguil'd—
The beautiful voice that my heart had beguil'd.

The book was begun. The writing of it was not an easy task in spite of the writer's warm interest in her theme. Little snatches of time, after the daily grind at her editorial desk was over, were all she could devote to it. Often she was too tired to write a line until she had rested

hours. Then, perhaps, to make up for such indulgence, she wrote far into the night—wrote as though bayonets were pressing her—wrote with no thought of publisher or public in mind. The truth, to write the truth, as it was revealed to her, this was her inspiration, her strength, her reward.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BUTTERFLY'S FLIGHT.

"The Knight of the Pale Horse, he laid
His shadowy lance against the spell,
That hid her Self: As if afraid,
The cruel blackness shrank and fell.

"Then, lifting slow her pleasant sleep,
He took her with him through the night,
And swam a river cold and deep
And vanished up an awful height."

—S. M. B. Piatt.

SOME time, it may be, before the world is very much older, we shall know well what now we but dimly discern, that thought is the substance and will the operating force of the universe, and that both are electric.

Then shall we understand the irresistible powers of attraction which thought has for kindred thought; and we shall know why we seek eternally our own kind of people, consciously or unconsciously, and never know rest for the spirit until we find them, for only with them is to be had the life-giving, soul-sustaining quality of sympathy, through whose vibrations the universe was formed and is maintained.

In obedience to this law of attraction Cartice Doring continued to search for persons awake to the joyful fact that there is no death, so she

might learn more of the laws which govern communion between life here and beyond. She found believers, but because of the various fads and diversified foolishness with which they frequently garnished their belief they were of slight help to her.

Each gave his faith a name that revealed the fence he had built around his mind, though he condemned all other fences. Some preached against the phenomena of the spiritual philosophy and secretly reveled in it.

And there were the theosophists, who, as Mr. Stead says, can always explain everything. From the proud eminence of their omniscience many of them looked down on plain spiritualists, and advised against showing any civility to spirits. Yet they patronized mediums and astrologers on the sly, and frequently produced a little of the phenomena themselves, merely to show their occult power.

Among these and sometimes outside the sacred pale, were reincarnationists who make the plausible and beautiful theory of progression through an eternity of existences distasteful and tiresome by their "memories" of past human experiences. They had been princes of high degree, invariably, never paupers or criminals. Napoleons, Cæsars, Mahomets, Cleopatras and Sapphos were wearisomely plentiful; but humbler types were rare. Many were so busy feeding their vanity with

these romantic hallucinations they had no time to learn anything useful.

Hypnotists were numerous, many of them claiming that their particular science accounted for everything under the sun.

Then there were many who declared that in all the universe there is but good; but they fell into factions represented by different leaders, and fought many and many a bitter bout to prove it.

It was enough to make one cry out in anguish, "Where can wisdom be found? And where is the place of understanding?"

Yet it had its hopeful side. It showed that many were thinking, and, though thought took different trends, all roads eventually lead to the truth.

Letters came often from Chryssalyn, but they contained no messages from friends invisible, for she never gave them an opportunity to say anything, after Cartice went away. She was afraid. Sometimes a picture or vision flashed before her, in spite of her avoidance of everything of the kind. If it pertained to her friend she told her; but that was all.

Six years had passed with never a sight of the Butterfly's beloved face, and never a word from the dear people of the unseen world. Cartice had felt their presence often, and knew that they were faithful; but she was hungry for a word from them.

Now came a letter from Chrissalyn begging her to spend some weeks with her. It was a particularly girlish and extravagant letter, almost a photograph of the mind of the unregenerate Butterfly of old. She knew a delightful little summer resort where they could go and be out of the sight and sound of work and care of every hue. She had set her heart upon it.

Arranging for a leave of absence Mrs. Doring soon was on her way. She found her friend in extraordinarily good spirits, and their reunion was of a school-girlish order of delight.

After a few hours the years of their separation seemed never to have been. We have all had this experience and wondered at it. After long absence we come back to a familiar spot, and in a little while find it difficult to persuade ourselves that we have ever been away. Perhaps this is a proof that to the true self there is neither separation nor distance, nor past nor future. All is near and all is now.

The Butterfly had a new assortment of radiant wings—otherwise garments—ready to spread gaily at the springs. One by one she displayed them with childish pleasure, for personal adornment had ever been her fetich.

“As we get on a little in years,” she said, “all we can do to head off the enemy, Age, is to make

believe we ignore him. Extra paint and feathers are necessary. I've had it flung in my face that I'm not so young as I was, but I won't admit it. Anyhow I'm still young enough to excite envy and jealousy."

Here she laughed with diabolical pleasure.

"I intend to make the best of this world and stay in it as long as I can, notwithstanding it's no paradise. But I have lost some illusions in regard to it. For instance, that of my own irresistible attractiveness. I can draw moths yet, but formerly I thought I could attract men, providing I ever encountered such beings."

Again, night after night, Chrissalyn sat as of old, calling up for her friend's delight the unseen people who were always ready to respond.

When Cartice spoke of the long time that had passed with never a word from one of them, Moreau said:

"No time has passed. There is no time. To the spirit a thousand years are as one day."

The last evening in the city came. They were to start for the springs early next day. The luggage was carefully packed and so their minds were easy on that score. When they went upstairs the house was perfectly still, all save themselves being asleep.

They sat down in Chrissalyn's room to chat. Cartice thought she never had seen the Butterfly look so young, so beautiful, so hopeful, so happy.

Preparing the table for Planchette they eagerly awaited the messages that would surely come over that inexplicable telephone.

Now something passing strange occurred. From the empty air beside them music burst forth—music the like of which they had never heard—music made by instruments unknown to them, but of unearthly sweetness, with power to thrill to the depths of their being.

Awed and amazed the two friends looked at each other, in silence. Then, as its heavenly sweet vibrations shook their souls, the tears ran from their eyes, they knew not why.

Again and again the unseen musicians made marvelous melody for the two enchanted listeners. Sometimes the chords were plaintively sad, sometimes joyous, but always penetrating the deepest recesses of being, the inner sanctuary where poetry and dreams have their high and heavenly dwelling-place.

The two entranced listeners sat facing each other, lost in the delicious spell of the melody.

Suddenly an electric breeze enveloped Cartice, sending over her that creepy thrill we are all familiar with, which resembles fear, but is not fear. There, before her eyes, just back of Chrissalyn, stood Prescott, looking exactly the same as when with them in material form. Somehow she was made to understand that she must not cry out—nor tell Chriss that he was there. Spell-

bound and silent she watched him. He laid his hand on the Butterfly's shining head, smiled and spoke. She saw his lips move, and the glitter of his teeth, but heard no sound, understood no word. Then, while her eyes were still upon him, he vanished.

"You look very pale, Cartice. Are you frightened?" Chrissalyn asked, as the music ceased.

Mrs. Doring shook her head, for her tongue, dry and powerless, was no longer a willing servant.

The music came back no more. After talking of the wonderful phenomenon awhile, they bade each other good-night and parted.

Cartice could not sleep. The strange events of the evening drove away repose. Again and again she recalled the expression on Prescott's face, trying to translate it into words, but in vain. Only one thing was plain. It was something pertaining to the Butterfly, and he didn't want her to know it.

After hours of wakefulness she slept and dreamed. She and Chrissalyn were dancing in a great and fantastic company. Everybody else wore masks, but their faces were uncovered. Chrissalyn was the partner of a graceful knight in black velvet who whirled her on and on, endlessly. At last they rose into the air together, and Chriss became a veritable butterfly, with beautiful silvery wings. The knight also de-

veloped wings, but they were black, like his garments.

Cartice called to her friend to come down, but she only laughed and rose higher, and finally flew out of sight. With a wildly beating heart Cartice awoke.

Rising, she dressed for the journey. Knocking on Chrissalyn's door, she received no answer. Then she called her, and with light and jesting words bade her make haste.

Still no answer. Opening the door she entered, but started back with a cry whose thrill of horror went to the heart like a knife.

The Butterfly had, indeed, spread silvery wings and flown, for there lay her chrysalis, cold, white and pulseless. The black knight of death had taken her out of sight. The delicate, long-ailing lungs had given way, and the inevitable end had come. She who loved the world and its foolish, fleeting pleasures had gone suddenly out of it. Whither?

It was a sad heart that Mrs. Doring carried back to New York, in spite of her knowledge that the Butterfly had but spread her wings.

Sometimes in the darkness and silence of night she talked aloud to her vanished, yet ever-present, friend.

"Where are you, Butterfly? Can you hear me and see me? Do you know how heavy is my heart sometimes? And are you happy in

your new world? Is life more beautiful, more perfect there? And do you love me still?"

No voice replied, but the light, caressing, electric touches came sometimes, and the stricken heart was comforted.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE PROP THAT FAILED.

"Ye have read, ye have heard, ye have thought," he said, and the tale is still to run.

"By the worth of the body that once ye had, give answer—what have ye done?"—*Rudyard Kipling*.

Two years passed, and Mrs. Doring still sat at her editorial desk. Farnsworth had been the kindest and most considerate of employers. The envious said no woman ever had an easier situation. They raised their eyebrows, when they said this, implying the usual sentimental insinuations; but they were mistaken. Farnsworth's regard for Cartice had no sentimental coloring whatever. He admired her ability and delighted in giving her a chance, and making that chance as pleasant as possible, having views on the unfair, industrial, political and social rulings from which women suffer.

He had come to New York, a talented struggler. Now he was a millionaire, chief proprietor of a great publishing house, which had become great under his management, and he loved to make the road a little smoother for those less able and less fortunate.

Cartice loved him, it is true; but not as the

common mind understands the term. Sometimes her eyes grew moist, while she looked at him and wished she might have a chance to prove her gratitude. He was to her like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. In the weakness of spirit ages have bred in her sex, she regarded him as a wall that stood between her and possible calamity.

"I need fear no financial disaster, while he lives," she thought. "His hand will be ever friendly; his heart ever kind."

Farnsworth was far above the average of men, but he had a serious weakness of character that made curious comradeship with his better attributes. Anybody, the least trustworthy, the most malicious, could sow in him seeds of suspicion against his best friend, and in ten hours they would be full-grown trees, loaded with bitter and baneful fruit. When this happened his kindness vanished and he could be as cruel as hate. His conscience fled the field, whenever his vanity was ruffled.

Knowing this a woman poisoned his mind against Cartice Doring, by a few lying words—a woman who believed it would be to her interest to get Cartice out of her way. The seed sown sprouted, grew, blossomed and bore fruit within twenty-four hours.

The next day Cartice found a note of dismissal on her desk, the curtness of which was incom-

patible with the pretensions of a gentleman, if addressed to one merely in the capacity of employee. But when the employee was a social equal, a faithful friend of years and a lady, it showed a lack of self-control on the part of the writer seldom surpassed.

The tenor of it was that, as she was "not doing justice" to the work entrusted to her care, her services were dispensed with. A check for the whole of the unfinished week was enclosed.

Cartice read the letter and sat like one frozen, and the heart-breaking, unbearable look of long ago came again into her eyes.

Every one who has received an unexpected, felling blow from the hand of a friend can understand the blended astonishment and anguish of that moment.

She knew who had turned Farnsworth against her and why it had been done, but that could not help the irremediableness of the situation. She could not go to Farnsworth and mortify him by telling him this; and she knew his implacable spirit too well to hope that he would so much as allow her an audience. Serious as was the blow to her finances, its worst effect was on her heart. Black and deep are the bruises made by the hands we love.

"I must not forget what I owe him for past kindness," she said,— "must not let this cruelty put hatred into my heart. I must forgive him,

for he knows not what he does. Being a man, he cannot know how difficult is life for a woman, under the existing order of things. Neither does he know how often heretofore my heart has bled from cruelty; nor how I have loved him; nor how weary and feeble I am much of the time.

"No; he doesn't know. Would any of us ever hurt another if we knew all that other has to bear? Besides, it is better to be the victim of injustice than the perpetrator of it. Ugly as is poverty, it is better to endure it than to have the power which the possession of millions confers and misuse it.

"Poor Farnsworth," she said. "Success has spoiled your naturally beautiful soul.

"The great destroyer of human conscience that goes by the name of business permits you to put me out of your service in a summary and humiliating manner, which puts me out of your life and friendship at the same time, though moral right to treat another human being in this way you have none. But the law of causality is ever operative, and you cannot escape the consequences of your deeds. You will get back your meed as you measure.

"I accept your dismissal as part and parcel of the destiny I am working out. Sooner or later every earthly prop on which I lean is taken from me. Everything has a meaning and purpose. The lesson I have been slow to learn is now plain

to me. It is that I must stand alone, and so must every soul, somewhere, some time. Props are destroyers of strength and character. In all the universe there is but one on which we may lean without inviting weakness, and that is Eternal Being, the background of all life."

Gathering up her little possessions from the place that had been her official home for eight years, Mrs. Doring walked out of it heavy-hearted and solitary. The rock from which she had expected shelter had vanished from her horizon forever. More! It had never been there, save in her imagination. It was an illusion from which now she was free.

Curiously enough we regret the loss of our illusions, yet we ought to thank God fervently every time we get rid of one, for it means that we are emerging from ignorance and darkness into light and knowledge,—approaching nearer to the truth that shall make us free.

On reaching home Mrs. Doring sat down to take a practical view of the situation. For nearly twenty years had she worked faithfully, having begun at seventeen. She had lived in modest comfort, and by dint of self-denial had saved one thousand dollars. What man above mediocrity would think that a fair recompense for half a lifetime's work?

A sudden cutting off like that is what any one may expect who has given his or her time and

talents to the building up of another's business. It is the soul's vengeance for not trusting it entirely, and confidently following whithersoever it may lead.

But there is something shamefully immoral in our business methods, when an employee after years of faithful service can be flung out without a chance for a word of defence. It is as though our father should unexpectedly open the door of his home and bid us begone forever. And is not our employer our business father, from whom we have a right to expect consideration? Does he owe us nothing more than our weekly wage? Must his relation to us be always measured only by dollars and cents?

Among the letters Mrs. Doring took with her from the office unopened was one from Bardell, now in Paris, famous and prosperous beyond his dreams. Strange irony of fate that brought to her his glad story of fresh successes on the day that carried defeat to her.

With the superstition common to Bohemia Bardell considered Cartice his mascot. His letters were always frank, friendly and charming. His last words were: "Follow your ideals. They will lead you into freedom."

This reminded her of her book. It was finished long since; but the writing was scarcely half the battle. It languished for want of a publisher. Those to whom it had been submitted,

had returned it, one and all, with the contempt, but thinly veiled with regrets, it had excited in their infallible minds.

One plainer spoken and less heavily veneered with the world's polish than the rest, said to her face :

“Come now, Mrs. Doring, you mustn't expect anybody to publish stuff of that kind—digging into the meaning of life, higher methods of evolution, ‘shall we live after we die?’ ‘ultimate destiny of the human race,’ and all such heavy timber. People take no interest in these questions. What we want is a rattling good love-story, with plenty of hugging and kissing in it. I like that in or out of a novel myself. There must be some iron-clad obstructionists in it, too, cruel parents or other able marplots, and the hero must get her in the last chapter or sooner. Anything but a story that doesn't end all right. The public abhors it. Now, your book is loaded with high-up, mountain-peak thought, and wouldn't sell at all.”

Another, with whom also, she had a personal interview, a young man with extraordinary faith in his own wisdom, smiled as he returned her manuscript, and made his smile so vocative it needed few accompanying words. “It is, ah—you know, Mrs. Doring, so wide a departure from the standard of art in fiction, that it might make even a publisher ridiculous, to say nothing of the

author. One must keep somewhere within sight of the existing canons. This, if you will pardon me, flies in the face of every one of them."

"I dare say," answered Cartice. "I never troubled myself about the existing canons. It is life as I know it that I have tried to portray; not life as somebody else says it should be painted in books."

After a number of equally disheartening experiences, the book was carefully laid aside to await the judgment day.

Meantime these same publishing houses were exuding cart-loads of marketable abominations, which were scattered in all directions, doing their share in weakening the minds of their unfortunate readers. Life, as depicted by them, was a mere sex-chase, more or less interrupted by the usual difficulties, all of which was quite in accordance with the "existing canons," so much respected by the young man with the smile.

Perhaps nothing gives us a lonelier feeling than to be cut off from our field of daily activity, whatever it may have been. Cartice found herself set back to the dreadful days of her beginning in New York. It was as though she had gone steadily up a steep slope, to a respectable height, only to be knocked violently to the bottom by the hand that was helping her upward.

"Had I developed the best that was in me—

followed my ideals"—she said, "this could not have happened. In that case I should have stood alone long since, leaning on no prop, depending on no person's caprice. Set-backs and knock-downs are our schoolmasters, and they are ever busy with us until we learn our lessons."

A loneliness assailed her heart, poignant, sharp, deep. All her life its resistless waves had at times rolled over her spirit,—a flood that would not be stayed. It was that kind of loneliness that creates a solitude which is not placed in a densely peopled universe.

Then came the comforting reflection that we are never alone, never solitary, however much we may seem to be, and never absolutely on our own hands, in spite of appearances. About us are ever the spiritual hosts, and back of us, within us and about us, the Supreme Self, to which each is both inlet and outlet.

On the evening of Mrs. Doring's first day of idleness, Gabriel Norris called to see her. For several years he had been a resident of New York. In the worst of the thick mass of the miserables he had set up his cobbler's bench, and opened an adjoining reading-room; and there he fished for the souls of men, in the great ocean of wretchedness whose huge waves beat about his door.

Cartice told him the story of her summary

ejection from the place that she had so long occupied, and the various shifts that she had been making in her mind for the future.

"It's a good thing," he said, "when you don't know just what to do, not to do anything—to wait,—wait without worry or anxiety—wait and trust. Unseen influences are ever at work on our destiny. We can hurry nothing, change nothing. Rest for a time. You have been so busy most of your life that you have had but little chance to get acquainted with yourself. You have a little capital ahead; rest on that. New ideas come in seasons of repose, for then the mind is receptive."

"That is what I had half-decided to do," she answered, "though I am still so much a slave to the old, erroneous belief that I carry myself on my own shoulders, I scarcely could get my consent to it."

"And when you feel so disposed," continued Gabriel, "come to my reading-room and read a story or a poem to my sheep—'my po' los sheep o' de sheepfol,' whom I try so hard to gather in. You may not know it—you know yourself so little—but you have the most beautiful voice I ever heard. Your reading, as well as your speech, is exquisite music. 'The soul of man is audible, not visible,' says Longfellow. 'It reveals itself in the voice. A sound alone betrays the flowing of the eternal fountain.'"

Anxiety and worry fell away from Cartice Doring soon as she determined to rest and trust. A profound philosophic truth is here revealed. When we trust, God Himself carries our burdens, and we are set free from care. Trust is the essence, the vital principle of religion, which is at heart a recognition of the divine intelligence within us, about us, and is reflected by us,—the reality we call God.

It was a joy to be the mistress of her own time, to know when she began the day that she could do with it what she pleased. It was luxury to sit at an open window and feel the air blow over her, and not be goaded by any thought of duty undone. She went about the city and enjoyed its treasures of art and beauty. She formed new friendships and cultivated old ones. She read and, through sympathy, entered into, the lives and feelings of authors and the people of their creation, as never before. She became better acquainted with herself, and by that means with all others. She went to Gabriel Norris's unsectarian temple and helped him feed his sheep. There the music of her beautiful voice called in many a lost one. The bitter loneliness that shadowed her at times fled away and troubled her no more. Her spirit came in sympathetic and loving touch with others, with all that is, with the universal mind itself, for this is the purpose of life, the union of the entire being

with its original. This is the true freedom which is the destiny of the human race. The individual self becomes one with the universal, and is henceforth free from limitations, from restrictions, from bondage of every kind. It exchanges its little circle of personal desires for the great world-consciousness. Whosoever does this even in the most limited degree puts care and trouble behind him.

Thus it was that this truth which Cartice Doring had long theoretically accepted, became a part of her being. She began to live it and be it, for we only really accept truth when we are it. Her eyes lost the look of suffering that lighted them at times with a moving and restless fire, and became trustful, hopeful, peaceful, like those of a happy child.

Difficulties and disappointments vanished and fear vexed her no more. She was like those who have won all battles, put all troubles behind them. She had the knowledge that within herself was power over all temporal dragons; that her welfare depended on no man's whim; that there are no accidents; that He who slumbers not nor sleeps, is "guiding each of His creatures in the current of an eternal purpose"; that she was as indestructible as the universe, and as old, as young and as deathless as its builder. She thought no more of happiness, because blessedness had come into her life,—the blessedness

which "consists in progress toward perfection." In an undefined way she felt herself approaching high summits, understanding that there is neither high nor low, near nor far in the universe save in thought.

XXIII.

THE BOOK AND ITS CRITICS.

The tale is as old as the Eden Tree—and new as the new-cut tooth—

For each man knows ere his lip-thatch grows he is master of
Art and Truth ;

And each man hears as the twilight nears, to the beat of his
dying heart,

The Devil drum on the darkened pane : “ You did it, but
was it Art ? ”—*Rudyard Kipling.*

ONE day Mrs. Doring received a letter from a lawyer announcing Kendall's death, and advising her that by his will she was sole heir to his property, which was valued at about twenty-five thousand dollars—a fortune in Bohemia. A few lines from the testator were enclosed, the last his hand penned. He had but one request to make in regard to the disposition of it, and that was that she use part of it in bringing out her book.

“ See,” she said to Lilla Joy, who had long lived with her in the little flat, “ how my trust is rewarded. Influences unseen were working for me while I rested. Had I been a little wiser, I might have saved myself much torment all my life. Worry hinders instead of helps, I believe it is one of the forty deadly sins the Egyptians tried to avoid.”

With money to work with it was not difficult to find a publisher for the book. It was a true tale, told in a simple, straightforward manner, of life and its meaning, as its author understood them. The theme of it was that life goes on after the change we call death, and is inconceivably enlarged and ennobled for all who aspire.

Such of the critics as worship plots and believe that the chief aim of life in stories and out is to marry and be given in marriage, made it the subject of very rough surgery.

"It is a most unwholesome book," said one. "Love and marriage are scarcely mentioned in it. Some twaddle that pretends to come from across the river of death is the only bait it has with which to angle for the reader's interest, a theme in which healthy minds will find no attraction."

Death waits for every one that breathes, yet any light thereon is "unwholesome and not attractive to healthy minds," according to those who tell us what we ought to read. Strange doctrine, but prevalent!

Another said: "One more of those deplorable books that deal in the supernatural and aim to make readers take a morbid interest in death. Its author has no eyes for the thousand fresh themes of life, but must needs delve into the darksome hereafter for material with which to burden her absurd pages. Why should any one turn from the sweet theme of love to wander in

paths so remote from taste and wholesome imagery as this?"

Some sneered at it, some ignored it and many abused it. Few had so much as a tolerant word for it. Yet verily a mystery guideth the fate of a book as well as the growing of a daisy, for "The Last Enemy" sold astonishingly fast, and was read and talked about far and wide. In a few months it was the best known book of the year, in spite of the critics, and brought fame and money to its author, though too late, her friends said.

Is anything too late? Come not all things at their appointed time, neither sooner nor later than they are due? In the divine drama of the universe the curtain never falls until the play is finished. In our short-sightedness we say our friend died too soon, or his good fortune came too late; but we are in error. Everything is part of the eternal plan, and to be out of time or place an impossibility.

Never to Cartice Doring had life appeared so well worth living, nor work so well worth doing. To Lilla Joy she said:

"I am just beginning to live. I am learning what life means, what we can make of it, and what I am. We are love.

"We love because we cannot help it. It is our expression, and the greater, wider and more all-inclusive our love, the fuller, larger, more perfect

and more abundant is our life. How beautiful it all is! How orderly and harmonious! How glorious!

"Most of my life I have written down to the majority of readers. Now I shall bring them up to me. I shall follow my ideals, as I did in 'The Last Enemy.' Our ideals! What are they but our souls, trying to reveal themselves to other souls. Here in this noble poem by Katherine Lee Bates, the ideal speaks:

"At the innermost core of thy being, I am a burning fire
From thine own altar-flame kindled, in the hour when souls
aspire:
For know that men's prayers shall be answered, and guard
thy spirit's desire.

"That which thou wouldst be, thou must be; that which thou
shalt be thou art;
As the oak, astir in the acorn, the dull earth rendeth apart,
Lo, thou, the seed of thy longing, that breaketh, and waketh,
the heart.

* * * * *

"Call me thy foe in thy passion; claim me in peace for thy
friend:
Yet bethink thee by lowland or upland, wherever thou willest
to wend,
I am thine Angel of Judgment, mine eyes thou must meet in
the end."

"I know that well, Lilla. Woe be to those who have outraged their ideal on that day, when their souls shall meet it face to face. I have sinned against mine, and have met its accusing eyes already. But now I have begun my atonement, and am eager to go on with it. There is

joy in creating what we wish to create—that means giving form to our ideals.”

But Lilla was silent, wondering what ideals her friend would follow in that country into which flesh and blood can never enter. In her eyes Lilla saw the strange light that flames up only when the end of the journey is near; and on her face, and in all that she said and did was a hint of imminent change, plain to others, unseen by herself.

In the Sanscrit is a story of one who asked what is the most wonderful thing in the world. The answer is that every man should believe that all shall die but himself. The reason of this is that he shall not die, and his soul knows it.

Remember this, you who see your beloved going down into what we call Death's Valley, serene, hopeful, unconcious of their doom. They are wiser than you. They know they shall not die.

CHAPTER XXIV.

WHO ARE THEY ?

“Who are they that are compelled to recommence the same existence?”

“They who fail in the fulfilment of their mission, or in the endurance of the trial appointed to them.”

—*Allan Kardec.*

If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain ;
They little know the subtle ways
I keep and pass and turn again.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

Personally I must confess to one small weakness. I cannot help thinking that the souls toward whom we feel drawn in this life are the very souls whom we knew and loved in a former life, and that the souls who repel us here, we do not know why, are the souls that earned our disapproval, the souls from whom we kept aloof in a former life.—*F. Max Müller.*

MONTHS on swift wing slipped away. Cartice's pen was busy every day, and every day she delighted more and more in her work, because she was saying what she wished to say, was expressing herself fearlessly and freely. New plans of action fairly rioted in her brain. Plans! When had they ever worked for her?

There are persons who mark out everything ahead, and Fate lets them live their arrangements to the letter, but Cartice was not one of them.

The lamp of the spirit, which tells unutterable things, now burned in her eyes, with an unearthly brightness, throwing its touching radiance over all her words and deeds ; but she did not understand. She alone saw not the heavenly illumination.

But one day the imminent change was made plain to her, though how she never told. Coming to Lilla, with whitened face, and the old-time, all-compelling appeal in her eyes, which neither man nor woman could see without a bursting heart, she said :

“I must soon leave you. It has been shown me and I understand.”

Under the spell of the wordless pain in the glorious eyes, her heroic friend flung her arms about her, crying, “Cartice ! Cartice ! My dear one ! I cannot bear it ! I cannot bear it !” And together they wept tears of such anguish as only the strong ever weep.

For a few days the heart-breaking look continued in Cartice’s eyes ; but in the silence of the night help came from the great source, and she got up one morning with peace shining in her face.

“Often in the past,” she said to Lilla, “I have wished I could die and be out of trouble. But now I want to live : now I know that dying doesn’t put us out of trouble. We must grow out of it by evolving above it, learning to master it.

“Most of my life, as I look back upon it, seems to have been mere blind groping. Now, when I think I have learned how to live, the business of life is done. And I have learned how to work in a way that never would meet failure; but that, too, is done.

“And yet, in spite of the mystery and the grimness of it, something tells me all is well; that nothing can be lost; that what I have learned will be useful somewhere. Perhaps we are here for the purpose of learning how to live and work. When that is accomplished, we must go on and learn other things, and we can take no other road than the one we have named Death, and painted black. But you and I know that it leads into light, and, though we die, we shall continue to live, and shall evolve, unfold and expand, even ‘it doth not yet appear what we shall be.’

“Yet knowing this—for we have knowledge, not simply belief—there are moments when a childish terror seizes me. But why should I fear? Millions have traveled the same road, the timid and faint-hearted as well as the bold and brave, and all went forth alone. We say alone, because we see no visible companions go with them; yet we know that no one is ever alone, either here or on that inscrutable journey, or at its end.

“But notwithstanding all I have learned of

the life to follow this, I cannot picture it—cannot form any clear idea of it. Nor can I realize that life as I know it now must end. I try to think of the days to come when I shall not be here, nor be anywhere as I am now, and when the form through which I act will have vanished utterly from the face of the earth, but I cannot! I cannot!

“I am always I in consciousness, always existing, never dead, never different. Is it not the mystery of mysteries?”

“I try to imagine a time when I may come here to our little home and be unseen by you, unable to lift a book, flutter a curtain or speak one word that you can hear; but I cannot. How inconceivable it is that in a short time I shall be in a condition so different from this that imagination itself cannot paint it!”

Cartice awoke from sleep one day with a loud cry, a wail of terror that went to the heart.

“What is it, dear?” asked Lilla, bending over her.

Her eyes wandered wildly around the room, and at last, reassured by a sight of familiar objects, lost their look of affright.

“It must have been a dream,” she said, “but so very real. I was lying under the elm tree at home, as I so often did when a child; yet I was as I am now. Close about me came a little company of people shining like the sun. When they

were very near, I knew them to be people from my planet—my own people, whom I remember well, and whom I saw in a dream years ago. One, a woman, the most beautiful of all, had a face so familiar I almost spoke her name; but I could not quite grasp it, though she seemed very near and dear to me.

“‘Your work is done,’ she said; and there was sadness in her voice, and pity in her eyes.

“‘Well done?’ I questioned, though with a sinking of the heart, for I began to be afraid, I knew not why.

“‘Did you always do your best?’ she asked.

“‘No;’ I answered, conscience-smitten.

“‘Then’—

“I interrupted, for I could not bear to hear what I feared she would say.

“‘Who art thou, who look so pitiful and seem so dear, and whom I yet fear?’ I asked.

“‘I am thine Ideal—thine Angel of Judgment—who hath so often come to thee and from whom thou hast almost as often turned away.’

“‘But I serve you now,’ I cried. ‘I do my best. I have learned my lesson.’

“‘Yes, you have learned the lesson, and will do better next time,’ she said, compassionately.

“‘Next time?’ I echoed, trembling with fear.

“‘Yes; next time, for you must come again and do it over and do it right,’ she said, sternly.

“Then I shrieked and awoke. O Lilla, now I

see, I know, I understand. I must live my life again and live it better—must do my best all the way through. I don't want to—no; I don't want to; but I must, and so must all who fail to give their best—not as penalty, but because it is the only way to learn, and to grow.

“We have lived always; we shall live always. This is the foundation rock upon which we build the indestructible temple, character. Victor Hugo spoke of life as a fairy tale a thousand times written, and said there was not an age in which he could not find his spirit. He believed he would exist forever, inasmuch as he felt in his soul thousands of songs, and dramas that never had found expression: He was sure he should come again and give them life. I, too, feel within me numberless tales untold which must be born somewhere. A great soul, like Hugo, may voluntarily come again and again to help others; but a recreant dreamer like me **MUST** come.

“Years ago I had a dream that now I understand. It is my belief, as you know, that every mortal has a soul-guardian—a being higher than a spirit, a dweller in the land of souls, beyond the middle kingdom, far away from the earth and its ties. This guardian gives us all the experiences we have, because he sees their uses in our development. The bitter cups we would fain have pass from us he resolutely holds to our

lips, because he knows it is good for us to drink of them. Blessings disguised as calamities and sorrows come from his hand, and all the fires of anguish that scorch us are fanned by his breath.

“I dreamed of this guardian angel. He was going with me through life, or rather through a series of scenes or situations representing different lives. I could talk to him, and hear him, but could not see him. Of the many pictures that were shown to me I remembered only two when morning came.

“In the one which represented a life before this I was resting on a rude couch, outdoors, near a blazing fire, in the midst of a nauseating swamp. It was after night, and the light from the fire played fantastically on dank little pools, rank tufts of grass, curious plants, watery mosses and slimy roots.

“Looking off into the swamp I saw a great mottled snake curled up in a hollow, looking directly at me, malignity darting from his eyes. I pointed him out to the people who were about me, and told them I would kill him. But one and all urged me to let him alone, and predicted serious trouble, if I disturbed him.

“I answered that it was trouble to have him there, throwing hate upon me with his eyes, and that, at least, I would give him a hint that his presence was not desirable. So I got up and threw a stone at him. It struck him straight on

his back, but rebounded as though it had met a wall, without so much as bruising him, save in spirit. It enraged him fearfully. He raised himself in the air perpendicularly till he stood on his tail, and hatred flashed from his eyes in bright electric rays.

“He did not stop at this, but hurled invective after invective at me in plain English, and threatened me as a snake never threatened before. He hissed, raved, cursed and glared at me, and swore that he would take it out of me in slices scattered along a thousand years. In short, he made me understand clearly enough that his principal business forever after would be to make me wretched. So direful were his threats that I lay down on my small bed quaking with terror, fearing either to sleep or stay awake, and ‘none had power to protect me from mine enemy.’

“To make it worse, the people about me said, ‘I told you so,’ and sermonized on the matter. They said, ‘You can’t destroy hate with hate. That increases it. That mottled fellow in the swamp is not the enemy you have to dread. The cruelty you put out, when you threw a stone at him, is your real enemy. It will come back to you through him, because it is the law. He will trouble you far down the line. Your heart shall bleed again and again, because of blows from hands you never injured; but it will be but your own deed returning to you, and something of

your mottled foe shall mark you, for many and many a day.' ”

(Lilla looked at the mottled eyes of her friend with a new interest, wondering if the curious splashes of tawn had been flung there by her ancient enemy.)

“Now I understand why I have been treated cruelly often by the very persons I loved and believed in. Somewhere I have earned it. Somewhere I gave it forth, and it has come back a hundredfold, for good and bad both multiply themselves on their return trips. Even Farnsworth's cruelty to me, which hurt me so much, was no doubt in accord with the law of causality I had set in motion. But he, too, shall reap as he has sown.

“The other picture represented this life, I think. I was climbing a hillside, accompanied by a little party of friends and attended by the guardian of my soul, who beguiled the way by pleasant speech and cheery good-will. At last we reached the top and found there an old-fashioned inn, clean and comfortable, with bare white floors, big rooms, and broad wooden sofas, that looked inviting to our tired bodies. Before I entered, I looked to the west, and saw a scene of beauty never to be forgotten. Sunlight, soft as moonlight, fell on fields of swaying grain, on trees gay with blossoms and heavy with fruit at the same time, on flowers whose perfume sweet-

ened all the air, on birds whose bright plumage dazzled the eye. I gazed spellbound. The very sky above was new and strangely beautiful. Looking down, I saw what before I had not noticed, that the hill was cut off close by my feet, and between me and this lovely landscape yawned a bottomless ravine. Stretching forth his hand and pointing to it, my guardian said, 'Behold the promised land! But you shall not enter in—not yet! No; you shall not enter in until you come with the great seal in your hand.' With one longing, hungry glance at the paradise I was not yet ready to know, I turned and went into the inn, longing for rest.

"I have almost reached the inn. I have seen the promised land but have not yet the great seal. After a rest in the inn—who knows,—perhaps I can bridge the ravine."

Those last days—those precious last days, how beautiful they were !

Northern forests put on a glory of gold and red after the frost has touched them with its destroying hand, and the winter is near. Dying suns diffuse a strange brightness, and the spirit of man, when passing out of sight, often radiates a heavenly splendor.

So it was that the soul of Cartice Doring never gave forth so much of sweetness as in the last days of her stay here.

"It is much to have learned one's lesson," she

said. "Next time I can begin in a higher class. So you see, after all, this life wasn't wasted. Yes, I have learned a little, and shall not find the road so rough next time.

"Would I could give others what I have learned.

"I smile at my early idea of happiness, though it wasn't unique at all, but quite common—the ideal of all the undeveloped.

"Now I know that happiness is a spiritual condition—spiritual healthfulness—spiritual unfolding the heaven within one which comes when self is forgotten and we see our oneness with all that is. It is our unfolding, our growth or evolution into knowledge, truth and light.

"It comes when we learn how to love,—when we see ourselves in every other self, and the supreme self in everybody and everything.

"What matter whether we call the great ocean in which we move and live and have our being, God, soul, energy, force or thought, we are its offspring or manifestation, and can never for one instant be separated from it. We are because it is. And see how this divine principle ever strives for our highest health and happiness. If I but cut my finger, it miraculously heals the wound. Out of its boundless resources it forms a new cuticle to cover the abrasion. If my spirit becomes sore the same power brings to me from every side, the sympathy and love, the spiritual sunshine and air which heal that too.

“The hunt for happiness is a true instinct of the soul, a prophecy of its divine destiny. We were intended for happiness, but a happiness far beyond our usual ideals.

“A great seer has said that ‘love is life, and love in us is the life of God in the soul of man.’

“My soul has always been homesick for its native land and its own people—which are but other names for love and sympathy—infinite love, changeless sympathy. Others, too, are familiar with this kind of hunger. All feel it and give expression to it in the chase of one phantom after another, and to each phantom they give the name of Happiness.

“Does it not prove that all souls are irresistibly drawn toward the great source of love from which they sprang, but know not the way thither? The bosom of infinite love is the happiness they long for, but in their ignorance of their true being and destiny, they pursue every will o’ the wisp that dances before their eyes.

“It is the soul’s quest for its home, which is not place, but state. We need not wait for death to let us in, for it is no more beyond the grave than here. The pure in heart have reached it.

“We can experience resurrection before death, if we will. When our spiritual nature is awakened, and we are set free from thralldom to material gods, we have been raised from the dead. We can take hold on eternal life now, for it, too,

is a state of the soul. It is to know and live and be the good.

“The long, long sleep of ignorance must end. The soul shall awaken to a knowledge of itself and be consciously one with Eternal Being from which it was projected, and be free, full-grown and happy.

“How shall this union be brought about? By our growth, our unfolding. We are our own redeemers. The individual is the reflection or manifestation of God. The higher man grows intellectually and spiritually, the more of God does he reflect. When he becomes pure in heart, high in mind, noble and unselfish in all his instincts and desires, he is in union with God, working His Will.

“A modern philosopher expresses it thus: ‘An individual is a subject which unfolds itself as an object.’

“‘Man, the progressively unfolding thinker, has descended from the eternally perfect creative Thinker.’

“‘Eternity for every man is but the unceasingly clear consciousness of his own identity in nature with the primal Thinker, of whose thought the whole universe is but the outer, organic form!’

“‘An individual is an indivisible, immortal, self-completing, ideal totality.’

“Now I think I know why at any cost we

should give expression to our ideals. They are streams from the central fountain of thought. To ignore them is to put ourselves out of harmony with the truth and essence of the universe. To give them expression is to vibrate in harmony with the great heart of all that is. What is a genius but one who is in touch with the central source of truth and transmits it to others?

“Now we begin to understand what the love of God is—a great ocean in which we perpetually swim, the ‘infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed,’ an energy that science admits but cannot explain.

“It is written, ‘Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make ye free!’ We shall know! WE SHALL KNOW.

“Already you and I, Lilla, know a part of the truth. We know that death is not the extinction of memory, conscience, love and all their attendant emotions. These are manifestations of the soul and cannot be destroyed. The body, a clay image projected by the soul to make itself visible, shall pass, but ‘the soul lives on, and all space, all time, all beatitude are its heritage and its domain.’

“The great secret of what, whence and whither shall yet be known. The dream of man’s perfection shall come true. You and I have read a few pages in the sealed book. For us the last enemy has been destroyed, the dark river

bridged. We know there is no separation; that the dead are neither dead nor gone. This is the great secret of the universe.

“I think I understand what it means to see God. The more we see of Him, or It—the great principle of intelligence and love—in the atom, the insect, the human being or the angel, the nobler and sweeter will be our lives. All possible forms and modes of existence are expressions of himself. As Whitman says, ‘A mouse is miracle enough to stagger sextillions of infidels.’

“My lifelong dream of finding my own people shall be realized.

“My people, my own people—they who aspired, struggled and suffered—who came to their own, and whom their own so often refused to receive. They who first announced the truth in all ages, and were stoned and crucified. They who brought their divine gifts of poesy and prophecy, of art and science, of light in its thousand forms and laid them on the world’s ungrateful altar. My dear people, I see you in the far dim aisles of the past, and I see you toiling up the shining heights of the future, and know you for my own, my spiritual kindred, with whom I dwelt in pleasant and also difficult places ‘huge times ago,’ and with whom I shall yet mount and mount great steeps now unseen.

“Are not all, all our own people, each a manifestation of the great soul or self that is imaged

in all other selves? But they who know how to love are more truly our own. They are farther on their upward journey. 'For as many as are led by the spirit of love, these are the sons of God.'

"All philosophies, all religions, all literature that fail to lead us back to love, our central source—love, the essence and substance of life, the energy of the world, the potential, moving force of all that is or ever shall be, are vain and foolish.

"Only to love one another. This is the whole law. This is what we are always longing and hunting for, though we give it many names and see it through many veils and in many shapes. But it is love, only love, the greatest and simplest thing in the world.

"Once I read a story of an Oriental magician who performed miraculous cures. When one whom he had healed asked his name that he might mention it in his prayers, he answered: 'I have many names, but they all mean the same—Love.'

"Love is all there is. Everything else is only an appearance or phantom. My search for my own people was but the search for love, yet how many mirages I saw, into how many pits I stumbled before I came in sight of its temple!

"But the love that opens the kingdom of Heaven, like the love of God, is 'broader than

the measure of man's mind.' It *is* the love of God—for it is the love of all that is. We know not love until we see ourselves one with the whole, without division and without difference, until we see every man as our brother and every woman as our sister and every child as our own, or better, as ourselves.

“Since I know that the law of sowing and reaping is inevitable in its operation, I begin to believe I have not found love in satisfying measure, because I have not given it out. My conception of it was the usual narrow one, and that fills one with self and selfishness. Love knows no self.

“Am I about to leave this world? No; because the world is part of the great Everywhere, which is the soul's home. Yet it is a solemn time with me. But I shall float out on trust. I *know* that all is well, and never can be anything else.

“The Hereafter, so much wondered about.—What is it? Just a continuation of being—an eternal now, an endless is, an everlasting present moment.

“Shall our dead be as they were here, when we find them again? This is the cry of the bereft. They forget that nothing is the same from day to day. The child becomes a man. As a child the mother loses it whether it live or die. Change, incessant change, is the law of external nature.

But the soul of the man is the soul of the child awakened and enlightened. Shall it be less, when it puts off its eternal form and becomes clothed in finer matter?

“‘Give us our dead, as they were, when they left us,’ wail the mourners at the tomb. Does any one here go away for a year or years and come back the same? Never.

“Is the future beyond death a mystery? Yes; but not more so than the future here. Does any man know what the next hour will bring upon him? Every moment ahead of us is as completely wrapped in mystery as is all that lies on the other side of the grave. In both cases we can only do our best, trusting in the love that created us, and that shapes our course.

“But the loneliness of life! Who can fathom it or explain it? and what can mitigate it? Mediocrity feels it not, for its sympathizers swarm. But in the hearts of the highest it is densest and deepest. As the soul grows upward, it feels itself isolated, and the isolation has in it a poignant anguish.

“Hours come upon us, when we feel that we touch no other soul. Even the companions we take to our hearts never enter the most solemn recesses of our nature. There the soul sits alone—always alone. And this invisible place, this awful solitude is the soul’s real world, its most fateful portion of existence. Yet into this secret

place, this hidden and lonely life, we take the ideas and feelings we cherish in relation to our fellow-beings, so that though we seem to live alone in the depths of ourselves, yet we are never severed from our kind, never really solitary. The oneness of humanity asserts itself and its claims upon us, and in spite of the soul's solitude we understand that no man liveth to himself.

"But the ache that nothing cures is always with us. We turn to the arms of human affection, it is there. We sit down to the feast of the intellect; it is there, likewise. We wander in search of new scenes; but, in the face of all that can delight the eye, it cries out from within for the satisfaction it never finds.

"Satisfied! Satisfied! Shall the yearning soul ever be satisfied? In the hope that it would, mankind constructed its far-off heaven, and said to the weary and the disappointed: 'There ye shall be satisfied.'

"But it is not true. Never, never shall we be satisfied. Though we explore all the mysteries of all worlds and taste all the joys and pleasures therein, we shall not be satisfied. 'We but level that lift to pass and continue beyond.'

"When I walk in graveyards and see the childish twaddle about 'Rest,' 'Heavenly Mansions,' and 'New Jerusalems,' there carved upon the stones, I am pained at the mental infancy they denote. Dying does not mean rest, nor does it

open heavenly mansions or golden cities to us. The striving and the climbing go on and never end.

“It is the ache in the heart, the void in the soul that cries out to be filled which lift us upward. Were we content, we should rise no higher. Were we satisfied, we should be in a condition which would insure our destruction. But the soul’s hunger for finer and better food is the principle of eternal life which makes us indestructible and eternally expansive. By means of it we grow. Thank God that neither here nor elsewhere can we attain content!

“And as we go higher we can reveal to lower souls their sorrows, and show them how to overcome them—how to grow. This is the greatest service one soul can render another.

“But we must not be content with mouthing theories—we must live our love, must give from the heart and look only to the heart, for ‘out of the heart are the issues of life.’ ‘The sign of the mastery of the divine life in us is the readiness to serve.’

“And we must not dream of rest. There is none anywhere, neither here nor on all the endless road that stretches before us. Life is action, ceaseless action.

“Nor is there any heavenly shore where we can wander free from perplexities and obstacles. Always, always will there be something to over-

come. We are building, building, ever building, we know not clearly what. Every unfolding of the divine life within us opens the way to still more unfolding. The heaven, the happiness, the joy we dream of and search for, is in the unfolding, not in any fixed state at which we shall arrive, for we pause nowhere.

“‘This is not Death’s world: it is Life’s. Death has no empire anywhere.’ In time to come its very signs shall pass away. There shall be no more graves, nor marks to graves to say that the dust of any lie there. All dust is the same and all places the same; and life everlasting is the eternal heritage of all souls.”

A few days later Cartice said she saw the Butterfly near her, and that she now had most beautiful wings. Others thought her mind wandered, but Lilla understood.

Clasping the hand of her friend, she smiled and slept; but her waking was on the other side of death, with her own people.

CHAPTER XXV.

LAST WORDS.

Come, lovely and soothing death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later, delicate death.

Prais'd be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
And for love, sweet love—but praise! praise! praise!
For the sure enwinding arms of cool-enfolding death.

—*Walt Whitman.*

GABRIEL NORRIS uttered the few reverent words that consigned the dust of Cartice Doring to the purifying flames. This was his conclusion:

“‘No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.’ We all understand that better, when in the presence of the voiceless dead, than at any other time. Then it is that we feel our oneness most; then do we come into more solemn touch with the great heart of all; then, even when our hearts are breaking, we better understand the infinite love that manifests in every event of our lives, even the last mysterious one which takes us out of the sight of our fellow-men.

“Then it is that the problem of life confronts us with importunate appeal, and demands from our bleeding hearts an answer.

“She whose still white form lies here, lived,

aspired, suffered, joyed a little perhaps, and learned a part of the great lesson whose book has no end, worked side by side with us, and then passed out of our sight, leaving only this perishable temple to return to its elements.

“Has she but passed through a door to array herself in new garments on the other side, in a larger chamber, or has the unit of her individuality melted back into the Universal ocean, as a drop of water falls again into the sea from which it has been dipped?

“Does the heart that has groaned in anguish and throbbed with love find the end of everything in dreamless oblivion? Or does it still throb on somewhere out of our sight, but not out of the care of the divine love that thought it into being?

“For her this great question was answered long before the illusion we call death transferred her to a larger chamber. She *knew* that she should never die; that, as a unit, an individual, a soul, she was indestructible, the heir of all the ages through all the ages.

“Communion of spirit? Do you sneer at it as an unsatisfactory, even if a possible thing? What else have we here? We are spirit now as much as we shall ever be, and all our communion with each other is spiritual, for every act of our lives has a spiritual quality, and is but the expression of spirit.

“The things we see are but fractions of that which we see not. We never saw the soul to whose visible form we bid farewell for a time to-day. We saw but its mask, its clay image. That which made its impress upon us was the spirit. By means of what it said and did, by the flash of kindness in the eye, by the pressure of the hand in sympathy, by all the means great and small by which it expressed its good will and love to others, it revealed itself. These are what we shall remember and cherish.

“Life is not all ‘a striving and a striving and an ending in nothing.’ It is an endless becoming.

“Let us work by every means in our power to educate the individual, to develop the unit, the imperishable, never-dying unit, for this is the secret of all improvement, all growth, all happiness. Only by growth out of ignorance into knowledge can we come into our inheritance of eternal good.

“Nothing is great in this world and nothing is small. I cannot say of the soul whose transition we celebrate to-day that it was either, for there is no distinction. It aspired, and that means much. It strove to go up higher; and that striving will lift it into the fulness of light.

“That living, loving, truthful, beautiful spirit, has not gone back to the sea of universal Being to lose its identity. There is no going back. In that sea we live and move and have our being

now, as well as in the future, yet we remain individuals. The union with the one mind toward which we are all moving is an harmonious ever-upward-tending life, not an extinction of the individual. The school, the club, the state are its prototypes here,—a blending of the many units in one body, but the extinction of none.

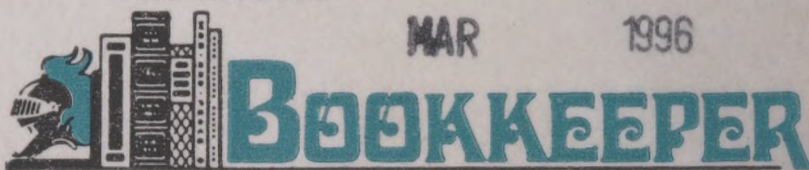
“We sorrow, but not without hope. Our friend still lives. We shall find her again.”

“I loved her,” said Gabriel Norris, as he sat with Lilla in the little flat after all was over. “To be near her I came to New York. She never knew; but now she knows. My love did not crave possession. I was happy in loving. I am still happy in it. She lives and I love her. It is enough.”

THE END.

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